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VOLUME I

LANGUAGE AND MAGIC

—— Studies in the Magical Function of Speech ——

BY

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PREFACE

The present volume is the first to appear of a new series of publications on the Humanities and Social Relations that has recently been inaugurated under the auspices of the Institute of Philological Studies at Keio University, Tokyo. I gladly take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to the General Editor of the series, Professor Nobuhiro Matsumoto for his interest and encouragement from the very beginning of the project. Thanks are also due to Professor Junzaburo Nishiwaki, of Keio University, for the kindness he has shown me on this and many other occasions.

I further express my thanks and appreciation to my former student Mr. Takao Suzuki for invaluable assistance throughout the entire process of developing this book. To him I am especially indebted for useful information and advice in connection with Chapter IX.

The present work does not claim to be anything more than a brief sketch, since limitations of space forced me to leave untouched many topics which might well have been included, and to select only those themes which seemed of the utmost importance for an investigation such as I proposed to make of the magical working of language. More than that, it was originally intended that I should write a few additonal notes on the structure of Chinese language in order to illustrate by concrete examples some of the points developed in chapters IV and VIII — concerning, in particular, the subject-predicate form of proposition and the historical formation of the parts of speech in Chinese. But I soon convinced myself that these were questions too large to be treated in that way, and that it was impossible to discuss them to my satisfaction without going too far afield for the purposes of this book. I have therefore decided to keep this discussion for a later day.

I fondly hope in a not too distant future to produce another work dealing especially with the structural characteristics of Chinese and the influence they have exerted on the ways of verbal thinking of Chinese people.

T. Izutsu

Tokyo, 1955

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTORY

Between Magic and Logic

From whatever angle we may approach it, language is a subject of infinite complexity, and problems it raises are naturally varied and numerous in the extreme. It is little wonder that many widely different methods of inquiry have been proposed by various scholars sharing an interest in this phase of human activity. In view of such a situation I think it not out of place to try to clarify, by way of preliminaries, the nature of the main questions to be discussed in the following chapters and the kind of approach which I shall follow in dealing with them, so that I might indicate here in gross outlines the scope and limits of my investigation.

To put it in a nutshell, my purpose in this book is to study the world-wide and world-old belief in the magical power of language, to examine its influence on the ways of thinking and acting of man, and finally to carry out an inquiry, as systematically as may be, into the nature and origin of the intimate connection between magic and speech.

No one will deny that language stands first and foremost among the vital concerns of the present age. Indeed in both academic and popular circles it is at present one of the most favourite topics. It is important to remark on the other hand that this general interest in linguistic problems is characterized by a markedly negative or critical attitude towards the working of the word, and this is altogether characteristic of the current trends of thought. We may usefully recall here the view which has been steadily gaining ground of late among radical thinkers that even philosophy should be conceived as a *critique* of language rather than as anything else. As often pointed out, ours is an age in which man is becoming increasingly word-conscious; an age, when the original, formative power of language has come to hold the central position in our conception of human mentalty, and when even the man in the street has realized with astonishment how easy it is to be deceived and misled by words. Such being the case, it is no cause for wonder that the 'magical' power of the word has come to occupy the focus of attention of all those who would explore the nature of the human mind and the structure of human knowledge.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that the sujbect bristles with difficulties and uncertainties. The very notion of 'magic' or 'the magical', which seems, on the face of it, clear and simple like anything, involves one in strange

perplexities as soon as one wants to work it out in detail in relation to the more fundamental aspect of linguistic activity. For the consideration of this problem will force one sooner or later into assuming the formidable task of elucidating the deep-lying magical implications of linguistic 'meaning' itself. Indeed, it is easy to enumerate and to describe various types of verbal superstition as actually encountered among savage peoples throughout the world, nor is it so difficult to bring to light the theoretical principles underlying these strange customs and habits. (This will be done in the earlier chapters of this book.) Grave difficulties present themselves if we attempt to go down to the hidden fountainhead of all word-magic, if we, in other words, want to trace back the apparently organic connection between magic and language to its ultimate source. However, this too must be attempted at all costs. So I propose to examine anew this difficult but highly important problem in the latter half of the book, and I shall advance there a working hypothesis regarding the prehistory of human language, which will help us forward a step towards clearness in conceiving the fact of the magical overtone of all linguistic meaning.

By way of a beginning, let us give passing attention here to the problem of the stratification of speech functions and try to follow the life history, so to speak, of the magical use of language as opposed to all other uses, from the earliest imaginable ages down to the present day. It will serve, I hope, as a general picture, which may profitably be kept in mind in order that my argumentation throughout this book might appear in the right perspective.

Now we can think of human language at several distinct stages of development. The noted French writer, Henri Berr, has made the pregnant remark: the hand and language, and Man is there. He means to say that the emergence of the hand and language in the ascendant course of living beings marks the close of zoological and the beginning of human history. Precisely how and when that decisive anthropological moment arrived, when the subhuman animal destined to become man stood up for the first time on two legs and began to chatter is a question which it will never be possible for us to clear up. But this much we can guess with a fair amount of probability: when human speech first started some hundred thousands of years before the dawn of history, it must have been scarcely more than animal cries, since in those earliest ages Man himself, in the limitations of his intelligence, could certainly not have been so far above his zoological brethren. Pithecanthropus who, together with Sinanthropus, represents the type of real but extremely primitive man, had a brain capacity sufficient for the development and expansion of those cerebral areas usually associated with the power of articulate speech, and his humanlike thigh-bone clearly indicates that he walked in the upright position (cf. Elliot Smith, *The Evolution of Man*). So he presumably did speak, but whether he spoke in the way we habitually expect man to speak is very doubtful. Specialists in prehistoric archeology tell us that even at the level of the paleolithic

Mousterians, that is to say after already 200,000 years — and this on a very modest estimate—of *human* history, man, with his chinless jaw, overhanging eyebrow ridges and a retreating forehead, was very bestial-looking, and his speech, judging from the attachment for the muscles of the tongue must have been still mumbling (cf. Gordon Child, *Man Makes Himself*, Ch. IV). Yet, on the other hand, the burials at Le Moustier suggest that even at this stage, he must have been already in possession of some animistic or pre-animistic ideas concerning the supernatural; moreover, the things placed around the corpses there are said to be such as may be interpreted as of magical significance. Of course we are completely in the dark as to the mutual relation of language and magic in those far-distant days, having no such evidence as would support even a hypothesis. But even here, if we permit ourselves to think in terms of pure theory, it is not at all impossible to picture to ourselves an imaginary scene of primitive magic—in the most rudimentary form to be sure—presiding over the fumbling first steps of human language.

It is sometimes held that the complete and fully fledged human language possibly dates from the epoch of Azilian culture (to be situated between the paleolithic and the neolithic ages). Now if this view may be taken as in the main correct, it would mean that the transition from animal forms of communication to the specifically human sort of language coincided in a broad way with the gradual formation of magical habits among our ancestors. For when, in the New Stone Age, we actually meet magic in various archeological remains, it is already fully developed and exceedingly luxuriant. Many thousands of stones and bone objects of magical purport, as idoles, fetishes, charms, amulets and talismans, that have been revealed by the archeologist's spade and assigned to the neolithic age, leave no doubt of the firmly established magico-religious usages of neolithic man. This supposed coincidence of the two decisive events in the cultural history of mankind—I mean the remarkable efflorescence of magical customs on the one hand, and the evolution of the full-fledged human language on the other—may perhaps be not without some deep significance for all theoretical discussion of linguistic origins.

I hasten to add, however, that this should not be taken as an argument for those who hold the 'Festal Origin' of language. It is not my contention, of course, that magico-religious ritual is the cradle of human speech, that only festive and ceremonial occasions could have given it birth. For, as K. Bühler has rightly remarked, that would surely be putting the cart before the horse. There are reasons to believe that the use of language antedated any formalization or standardization of ritual. But yet it would be a grave mistake to discard, on that account, the essential part that may very well have been played by magic in the formative process of human language, and to argue, as Bühler has done in his *Sprachtheorie*, that all magical associations clustering round the words we use are in reality nothing more than additional and extraneous elements that have been gradually, piled up so to speak, on the already hardened surface of language.

Since the topic must obviously receive our constant consideration throughout the volume, I shall devote to it now just as much attention as is required for my immediate purpose, leaving further detailed discussion to my later chapters. With this in view, three points may provisionally be stressed. First, that the phenomenological structure of human language is *symbolic* throughout, in the sense in which E. Cassirer defined the term in his *Philosophie der Symbolischen Formen.* If we approach our problem from this viewpoint, the genesis of language may perhaps be traced ultimately to the deep-rooted tendency of the human mind towards what Susanne Langer has called 'symbolic transformation', i. e. the primary need in man of translating his experiences all the time into symbols. We shall note that to say this is to recognize at the same time that language stands in an extremely close relation to magic. In a recent work on *Thinking and Experience* H. H. Price has remarked that dreaming is perhaps more natural to the human mind than waking life is; that 'its native element, so to speak, would be a world in which everything desired was *ipso facto* fulfilled, and all propositions verified by the mere fact of being thought of' (p. 140). If indeed this type of non-empirical thinking may be acknowledged as the essential act of mind, if the fundamental structure of it be such that 'the mere thought of black clouds might cause it to believe that rain was imminent, even though the sky was in fact cloudless,' then we may perhaps feel justified in regarding language and magic as twin sisters born of one and the same natural proclivity of the human mind towards dreaming and symbol-making.

And now for my second point. Most of the theories hitherto advanced both for and against admitting the magical as a really constitutive factor of linguistic meaning appear to have identified all 'magic' with its standardized forms, i. e. with traditionally fixed ritual acts and beliefs, just as though there were no other notion of magic to be taken into consideration. This, in my opinion, is to commit an error of over-simplificafion. It will be seen more and more clearly as we proceed with our problem that the chief defect in previous theories has been the failure to recognize that magical ritual must have been revealed to man in a number of subjective, emotional experiences, that, before being standardized into permanent forms, it must have long played its role as what may be best described as spontaneous ritual of emotional expression. We must note at once that it is precisely this latter kind of magical ritual—the predecessor of standardized magic, we might say—that will prove to be of central importance for the general theory of meaning.

Now the facts of savage life are customarily interpreted in terms of the essential duality of the magico-religious and the profane. It is a commonplace today among anthropologists and ethnographers that primitive man lives in a manner of speaking in two essentially different worlds: the work-a-day world, the region of natural, normal, and wholly calculable happenings on the one hand, and the world of extraordinary, supernormal, or supernatural affairs on the other. It is but natural that magic (understood in the sense of standardized maigc) should, on this assumption, be made to belong entirely and exclusively to the latter kind of life context, while it is science, the knowledge of how to deal practically with ordinary things, that is believed to govern the former. This is doubtless largely true, and I am in no way prepared to maintain that the theory is objectionable. It must not be lost to view, however, that if we should attempt to dichotomize the practices of primitive life too rigidly and thoroughgoingly, the result will surely be a distorted view of the role played by the spirit of magic not only in the formative process of language but in the life of primitive people in general.

To put it briefly, my own opinion is this: in order to grasp better the more dynamic aspects of the magical as it acts upon the human organism both in its outward conduct and in its mental and emotional life, we must recognize that the so-called 'domains' of the Sacred and the Profane are not seperated by a sharp break, but are connected with each other through an intermediary phase of what we might call after Malinowski 'spontaneous' magic. Spontaneous magic, in contradistinction to the formalized, standardized type of magic, consists in man's spontaneous natural responses to overwhelming emotion or obsessive desire, uncontrollable outbursts of emotion in words and gestures, such as the threatening gestures in fits of anger, the natural flow of words of malediction against the enemy, the spontaneous mimic reproduction of the wished-for result, and so forth. These are after all strnog emotional experiences which assail man in the middle of daily practical activities, and belong as such to the domain of the natural; but yet, from a changed perspective, these spontaneous acts and spotaneous works are seen to contain in germ practically all the principles of magical ritual. The introduction of the new notion of spontaneous magic will cause us to see the problem of the relation of language with magic in a new detail, and as having aspects hitherto unnoticed by most writers. In particular, it will offer, I hope, an illuminating sidelight even on the problem of liguistic origins. But of this I shall have ample opportunity to speak later on (cf. Chapter VII).

The third point which I should like especially to emphasize at this preliminary stage is the necessity of giving careful consideration to the action and reaction of language and its magico-religous environment upon each other in the creation of the mythical picture of the world which marks everywhere the earliest phase of primitive speculation, Whatever may be said of the hypothesis of the magical origin of language, whether, in other words, there was or there was not an essential, organic connection between magic and language from the very first, it will at any rate remain certain that at some prehistoric period the two came into a most intimate connection, interpenetrated and permeated each other until at last language as a whole and as such came to be, as it were, consecrated. In the above mentioned book, Erenst Cassirer has made a great point of the fact that the concept of

language as such is first engendered in this sort of mythical view of the word. It will be important to remark also that this can only occur in a society where the magical spirit pervades the whole life of man, where it not only presides over the domain of the sacred but somehow extends its sway even over the domain of the profane.

Reference has already been made to the danger of enforcing the dichotomous division of normal and supernormal too rigorously upon the life-habits of primitive people. As one would expect, the same kind of danger again makes its appearance in connection with the present problem. In fact, in most current discussions on primitive psychology, little attention seems to be paid to the very fluid nature of the equilibrium between the two 'domains'. It is usually assumed that both are of equal importance in all savage societies, and that both modes of life run everywhere side by side without ever mixing. A better insight might be obtained if we introduce here the perspective of historical evolution. The fact of the matter is that under the guise of peaceful co-existence there has been a constant struggle for supremacy between the magico-religious and the rational principles. Everybody knows that the world outlook of the ancients was notoriously superstitious, while that of the modern cultured people is becoming more and more free from magic and superstition because of the ascendancy of the rational principle. This implies that the profane world of practical concerns has so enlarged itself to the detriment of the realm of magic and ritualism that the latter has at last been reduced so to speak to a mere strip of land on the surface of our social life.

Now this fact alone will be enough to suggest that, if we follw the long history of this 'territorial dispute' in the reverse direction we shall see the dominion of the purely normal becoming ever more restricted with the rapidly growing supremacy of the magical principle until in the end the pendulum will have swung completely the other way. We shall witness the spirit of magic and ritualism penetrating gradually into almost every corner of society, and pervading those phases of human life which, to us, are wholly secular and normal. Thus at the extreme end of this mental retrogression, we can imagine a stage of evolution of primitive life, at which magico-religious ideas govern almost unrestrictedly the individual and society, at which, in short, magic is practically co-extensive with life itself.

This was suggested by James Frazer, who, in the first volume of his *Golden Bough* put forward the now famous hypothesis of the 'Age of Magic'. Just as on the material side of the history of human culture there has everywhere been an Age of Stone, he argued, so on the intellectual side there must have been everywhere an Age of Magic. It seems that the universal laws of growth which develop the physical man into the characteristic traits of the race, act also on his mental structure, driving the human mind to evolve everywhere in the same direction; and that direction, strange as it may sound at first hearing, is always that of magic and ritualism.

The 'Age of Magic' is certainly nothing more than a working hypothesis, but that it is not a groundless piece of fantasy has been shown, I believe, by the trend of recent anthropological and ethnographical studies. In fact, an increasing number of observations on the ways and customs of primitive man has brought to light not only that magic is found everywhere even among the rudest tribes, but that in a very great majority of cases it is found to absorb nearly the whole life of a man under primitive conditions. A broad survey of social customs and habits of life prevalent among primitive peoples today will clearly show that what we usually call daily practices and consider as nothing more than simple, practical acts, such as eating and drinking, washing, bathing etc., do possess, in the eyes of the primitive, a strikingly deep symbolic value; that these, so-called routine actions of our modern cultural life are in reality but faded rituals. Indeed we are even somewhat perplexed today by the discovery that, from the cradle to the grave, nay, from awakening until sleep, the life of a savage is regulated to the minutest details through strict prescriptions and interdictions of a magico-religious nature. Not only are all the 'crises' of life (birth, adolescence, marriage and death) and important collective undertakings (hunting, agriculture, or commerce) surrounded with solemn rites and ceremonies, but throughout the practical everyday existence itself there runs a dim perception of sacramental forces which seems to tincture the whole life with something of the magical. So much so that in some extreme cases there appears to be practically no 'daily life' in the sense in which we normally understand the term.

Thus whether we go in the direction of our ancestors or in that of savage tribes living today on the periphery of the civilized world, we seem driven ever more to conclude that the human race is foreordained to pass through a peculiar stage of mental development which may be most aptly described as an 'Age of Magic', in which magical preoccupations largely dominate almost every sphere of life. Indeed, the further we go back in time and the further we get away from higher modes of life, the more indubitable does it seem to become that magic does form the keynote of primitive life, and that the mind of primtive man, in spite of all the weighty objections that have been brought against the theory of Lévy-Bruhl, is after all predominantly 'pre-logical' or pre-empirical. Viewed in this light, the magical note which prevails over the linguistic behaviour of early and primitive people in general proves to be no other than a partial—though evidently the most important—aspect of their total magical orientation of life. The universal belief in the sacrosanctity of the 'word' as such (and not of this or of that individual word alone), which is counted as one of the characteristic features of the mythical thinking all over the world and throughout the ages, and which, as one sees, is too striking a phenomenon to be a mere curious coincidence can only be satisfactorily accounted for if we consider it as a peculiar product of the Magical Age and study it against the background of various ideas, customs, and habits which characterize such a stage of mental evolution.

Now to sum up all these considerations: I have made a beginning by assuming that both language and magic may with some confidence be traced back ultimately to the basic need of the human mind of forever providing itself with symbolic versions of experience, that is, in short, to the natural proclivity of man towards symbol-making. As regards the mutual relation between the two, it has been suggested that magic may possibly antedate the evolution of language, for such an elaborate and high form of symbolism as human language could hardly have arisen except in those places where the lower processes of symbolization were already in exuberant growth. I have further suggested that magic in the sense of spontaneous ritual, i. e. the reaction of human organism to a critical situation in spontaneous outburst, may very well be regarded as the matrix of spoken language. But whether this is true or not, it is at any rate an empirical fact that the linguistic outlook of early man is so closely associated with magical beliefs that they appear as continuous and inextricable, and this fact must be explained in some way or other. The hypothesis of the 'Age of Magic' has been presented as of decisive importance for elucidatng the process of this integration.

Solomon Reinach once said: human history is the progress of laicization. In fact, since the dawn of historic age the story of mankind may succinctly be said to have been a long arduous process of transforming the primitive magico-religious world-view into a completely secularized and physically founded scientific outlook. Enormous has been the amount of effort paid by man for emancipating himself from the fetters and bondages of superstition and other primitve stages of mind.

This process we can observe in a more condensed form in the history of language. Closely parallel to the progress of laicization of man's life, and faithfully reflecting it in its various forms and functions, language has increasingly emancipated itself from the hands of such symbol-mongers as magicians and sorcerers, has gradually made itself an instrument adequate to the full complexity of human life in a secularized society. Now as modern society shows a strong tendency to become more and more differentiated into varous independent spheres of activity, each with its intricate network of relations both public and private, it is only natural that the uses to which words are put should become correspondingly ever more diversified and variegated. They are, so to speak, forced to increase in flexibility and adaptiveness, and in accordance with the ever growing demands of culture and civilizaton, to become charged with increasingly manifold functions to subserve. Thus it comes about that what we now call under the simple appellation of 'language' is in reality a highly developed complex structure, a composite made up of multiple functional layers. Under the exsiting conditions of contemporary individual and sccial life, one and the same word or one and the same combination of words is in this way constantly required to minister to a vast variety of purposes. Hence the urgent need felt in any scientific treatment of linguistic symbols of distinguishing and isolating fundamental modes of meaning or language 'uses'. In point of fact, since

the publication of the pioneer work of C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards on *The Meaning of Meaning* in which the now famous referential-emotive dichotomy of meaning functions was first presented to the learned world, various attempts have been made to differentiate the principal ways in which linguistic symbols are used and then to subdivide them into a number of secondary divisions, and a good deal of controversy has been wasted on the subject. Now if we go down to the very root of the issues involved, the problem turns out to be the basal one of a comprehensive classification of major kinds of signs and symbols, a problem which is beyond any doubt in the forefront of current philosophic and semantic speculations.

As one of the most serious attemts that have been made to cope with this problem we may mention that of Charles Morris who, in his *Sings, Language and Behavior,* distinguishes four principal modes of signifying, four primary sign usages, and by pairing these two sets of distinctions obtains sixteen major 'types of discourse' or specializations of language. It is perhaps unnecessary to go in detail over all the language uses thus distinguished, for it would take us too far afield for the purposes of this chapter. I must also for the moment leave on one side the question as to the legitimacy of treating, as he does, linguistic symbols within the framework of a purely 'behavioral' semiotic. I shall simply point out here the fact that many of the specializations of language recognized by Morris are apparently far removed from the realm of magic and ritual. The fact is that the steadily growing laicization and ramification of human life has brought about a vast variety of specialized uses of language which bear little or no relation to primitive world-view, so that the magical use of language has been so to speak driven away from its former place of honour and has become only one use among others. From our modern point of view, it occupies but a very special and very insignificant position, having nothing at all to remind us of those glorious prerogatives which it once enjoyed.

Apparently the magical function of language has, among us, been altogether forced into the background of social and individual life; it has not precisely died out, it is still living, but barely living confined to a niche of its own. Witness the so-called ceremonial or ritual language which is in fact no other than the lineal descendant of the primordial magical language; it is evident that its usage is now restricted to a narrowly limited range of circumstances. We do certainly hear ritual language on some solemn occasions of more or less religious import such as marriage ceremony, burial service, or rites performed in houses of worship. But these are very specific and very rare occasions definitely set apart from ordinary life; add to this that they are rapidly losing the magico-religious associations which they originally possessed. We do use ourselves this kind of language when, for instance, we utter a curse, take an oath, recite a creed, say words of promise. It is no less than David Hume who compared a promise 'by which we bind ourselves to the performance of any action' to the use of words in holy sacraments. But, judged by the rational standard of modern living, these are after all but trivial things;

they are simply discredited survivals from the primitive ages when man was a 'savage' in the fullest sense of the word. How many of the denizens of our modern civilized world are conscious of performing some magical act when, say, they utter a formula of greeting? No one can be absurd enough to take the swear words used in everyday conversation as real magical formulae; everybody knows that they subserve no greater function than that of mere 'intensification'. "By Heaven!" "Goodness gracious!" "My God!"—these and hundred others have all but entirely become interjections. Living in a pre-eminently scientific age we no longer think in terms of hidden agency; nor is our society equipped with all sorts of gifts of civilization a fit place for ghosts, devils, demons, and other malignant or benevolent spirits to hover around. What use, then for all those wildest vagaries of our savage forefathsrs such as magic, sorcery, divination, and prophecy? What have primitive uses of language to do with us, when they are known to be mere relics of savagery?

Indeed, nothing seems to be so remote from the scientific mind of today as magic and sorcery, whether verbal or non-verbal. Even if it be true, as I believe it is, that the magical use of language represents the most primitive, that is, genetically the most fundamental speech function, of which all the others may be but secondary derivatives, yet it must also be recognized that genetic priority does not necessarily spell 'priority' without qualification. And it is quite conceivable that, from the standpoint of contemporary users of language symbols, the scale of valuation should appear even completely reversed. As a matter of fact, this has induced many eminent writers on language to hold an extremely low opinion of this peculiar speech function. Some have thought it too negligible to be specially attended to; others have attempted to explain it as derived from some more fundamental function or functions. Irving M. Copi of Michigan, for instance, who adopts a threefold theory of basic linguistic functions, namely, informative, expressive, and directive, states in his *Introduction to Logic* (1954) that the 'ceremonial' use of language cannot be recognized as an altogether unique kind of usage, but can be best understood as a mixture or combination of expressive and directive functions (p. 27-28).

We shall note that such an approach, though perhaps legitimate and justifiable so long as the purely *logical* analysis of language is concerned, may nevertheless lead to very superficial, and in many cases, erroneous views on the nature of our own linguistic habits. My own feeling is that no theoretician of language who would grasp the mental processes which underlie the mechanism of speech can afford to ignore the uniqueness of the magical function of words, the effects of whose working become more and more conspicuous as we penetrate deeper into the mystery of human language. Furthermore, a slight shift of perspective will at once reveal that the spirit of primeval word-magic which we generally believe to be well-nigh dead and extinguished in the civilized parts of the world, is, in reality, still alive with scarcely unabated vigour—though, needless to say, in greatly

modified form — even among contemporary cultured men, and that these so-called 'relics of savagery' are exerting in overt as well as covert ways an enormous influence upon various aspects of their thought and conduct.

Dogs and cats, says Stuart Chase with a bitter sense of irony, are 'realists'; they have no superstition; the lord of the earth alone is capable of unbelievable follies and absurdities. The love of magic as one of the essential traits of human mind has, for good or ill, had much to say in the development of that speech faculty which is undoubtedly characteristically human. This alone will be enough to drive home the lesson of the last paragraph, namely, that no real analysis of linguistic habits at the human level can with impunity ignore the singular importance of the magical function of language which has its root deeply struck in the inveterate symbolic tendency of man's mind. We may rightly look down upon various linguistic habits of openly magical import which we still observe around us as 'primitive absurdities', but it would be a grave mistake if we forget the while that the language in our possession is an instrument originally designed to serve 'absurd' purposes, that it is 'a medium developed to meet the needs of arboreal man' (Ogden and Richards). With all its wealth of modernized forms and rationalized structures, it is, after all, the absurdity of absurdities. We may do well to keep in mind that even when we are talking or thinking in terms of logic and science the words we actually use are largely survivals from the remotest ages.

Now since my standpoint in this study is not that of present-day users of linguistic symbols, and since, further, my immediate theme is an exploration of the deeper strata of speech mechanism, I shall be excused for parting with the rationalistic view of language with its characteristic tendency to lay too great a stress on the *communication* of thought as the end of language at the expense of other functions. But it would be too rash, even in this kind of investigation, to undervalue systematically the immense importance of the intellectual aspect of language. For there is evidently no denying that the rationalization of linguistic symbols is one of the most precious acquisitions of human intellect on its onward march, and it is clear, moreover, that it has been the starting-point of practically all genuinely intellectual works of mankind.

The highly prized designative-informative capacity of language, i. e. the capacity of lending itself to utterances designed for the objective, disinterested statement of fact, or even to propositions belonging to the scientific type of discourse is obviously the farthest removed from the circle of magical ideas, being, at the extremity of development, even diametrically opposed to all magical evocation. Since, however, no real use of words is thinkable without any element of indication or designation, the informative function in its rudimentary forms must have been present in human language along with other functions from the very beginning. What is more, there is even a respect in which this speech function, whose present status seems to have nothing at all to do with magic or ritual, might well be

traced back to a magical origin. Besides, the evidence afforded by anthropology and ethnography shows that the act of indication or designation itself, whether physical or mental, is to the early type of mind not without some deep magical implication. But this aspect of the problem calls for a lengthy discussion, and I shall return to it more than once in later chapters. Let it suffice for the moment to remark that, whatever may be said of the origin of the designative-informative use of language, its growth was evidently made possible only with the extraordinary development in men of intellectual quality, and, more generally, with the advance of culture and civilization; as to its scientific or logical elaboration it will need no special stressing that it dates from the nearest past.

So important a part has this newly developed function come to play in the intellectual life of the civilized men and women of today that they are apt to forget that even they use their language in ordinary circumstances rarely in an objective way. Many thinkers have written as if this were the most natural function of human language. To describe objects or to make statements is very often supposed to be the typical use of words, upon which all the others must somehow be superimposed. Such a view has resulted from an insufficient observation of the way language is actually used. The objective, disinterested statement of fact, to say nothing of logical reasoning, is not at all a common thing even among the members of civilized countries. Nor, for that matter, is our language in any way a perfect instrument. On the contrary, upon even a cursory examination it soon reveals itself to be too inadequate a tool to be relied upon for purposes of science and logic. Beset with all manner of misleading qualities, it has sometimes been rightly compared to a magical mirror specially devised for the purpose of distorting reality. Modern mathematicians and logicians interested in linguistic problems are generally more or less sceptical of the possibility of straining the logical resources of natural language. Each sentence, so assures us R. Carnap, in order to become logical must be rewritten; but even if rewritten it would not be sufficiently logical. So much so that those who demand a strict exactitude are sooner or later forced to go beyond the natural language and to have recourse to some artificially constructed logical language developed by scientific reflection.

These various considerations taken together seem to suggest that we may possibly construct with a fair amount of success a comprehensive theory of language on the basis of the opposition of magic and logic as the two poles of all linguistic behaviour. There can be no pretence, of course, that this is the sole (or best) approach to linguistic theory; it will be but one among many possible ways of access, and a very specific one into the bargain, but it will have the advantage of bringing to light such aspects of the problem as would otherwise remain unnoticed. The central point of such an approach will consist in examining afresh the whole domain of linguistic activity in terms of a struggle between magic and logic; in other words, language will be presented as something sandwiched between these two rival

principles striving for supremacy with each other. In an ancient Oriental myth, the story is told of how the terrestial world, falling a common prey to two competing cosmic powers, finally comes to assume a double status, partaking of the characteristics of both the realm of Light and the realm of Darkness. Such is precisely the case with the present status of our language held between the magical tendencies deep-rooted in human nature on the one hand, and on the other now rapidly growing logical demands for ever more precise information as to the exact facts observed.

Thus language, on this assumption, will be conceived as a very complex and characteristically double-faced halfway thing, neither purely magical nor again perfectly logical, but always fluctuating in varying degrees between the two poles, from the lowliest, i. e. openly superstitious, use of words to the most objective statement of fact in the scientific type of discourse. Without going more into detail on this subject here, I will only note down the result I have in mind. It is as follows: as there can be no magical use of language without at least a minimum of logicality, so in ordinary descriptive use of language—or even in scientific discourse—the actual words employed cannot in the nature of the case be entirely free from illogicality. In natural language there always is something that stubbornly resists to a thoroughgoing logical analysis, and that is why any attempt at logicalizing it in its entirety is predestined to a break-down.

As I have suggested before, the words and the ways we combine them are largely remnants from primitive ages. The primeval force of magical spirit lurking behind these survivals time and again reasserts itself. Though apparently it has been completely driven out of the vast field of contemporary scientific discourse, and though it appears to be rapidly losing its ascendancy over other fields too, yet as long as we speak and think by means of hereditary words, it is not extinct; it is still there, working in disguise. As John Murphy remarks, 'we slip back upon the primitive in religion as in feeling and conduct, because the primitive is in us all, and even what is highest in us has climbed up from it, and has its ultimate origin in primitive forms' (*The Origin and History of Religion* p. 4). Paradoxical though it may sound, our century, according to some competent semanticists, suffers more grievously than any past age from the ravages of verbal magic. Why? Because the verbal magic has, so to speak, gone underground; it has altered its ways, has disguised itself, and has assumed more insidious forms than before. It has to a great extent been neutralized and enervated, but by suffering this loss it has succeeded in becoming the warp and wool of all our thinking without our being in the least conscious of the fact. And herein lies a great danger.

It seems to follow from these considerations that in order that we might be in a position to deal adequately with some of the most pressing linguistic problems of the present age, when man is becoming more and more word-conscious and when the dangerous snares and traps laid everywhere by our own language are being

keenly felt, we should once again trace our linguistic habits as far back in time as our materials allow us, or even beyond that, and thence try to reinterpret them by all the stages of development in between. Not only can we by this means hope to go to the very heart of the difficulties lying at the root of the problem of word-magic which is so much in the forefront of current attention, but we might perhaps open a new sort of approach to a number of old questions.

Chapter II

THE MYTHICAL VIEW OF LANGUAGE

The age of animism, or the 'Age of Magic', to which reference was made in the foregoing chapter, tends to produce, as we can easily see, all manner of verbal superstitions. I will begin by giving in this chapter a few typical instances of word-magic in order to get a good starting-point for the formulation of our main problems. But a preliminary difficulty must be faced before we can examine successfully the relevancy and significance of the examples which will be given.

Up to the present we have used the terms 'magic' and 'magical' in a somewhat loose, undefined way. The proposed scope and aim of our study being, however, not to deal with the superstitious conception of language which characterizes the thought of man in the early stages of his cultural development, but primarily to elaborate in terms of general linguistic theory the notion of magic in so far as it concerns the very make-up of human language, it would seem necessary to introduce at this point some more precision into our terminology. However, it is far from easy, if not impossible, to frame a satisfactory definition of the concept in question, if only for the reason that it immediately raises another puzzling problem of drawing a line of demarcation between magic and religion, a problem which has long exercised and vexed the ingenuity of anthropologists and students of comparative religion and has ranged the leading authorities of the last generation on opposite sides, as to whether magic involves, as certainly does religion, a belief in conscious or personal agents, and as to which of the two is older in the history of humanity. The well-known theory of James Frazer which he has propounded in *The Magic Art* (Chap. IV), suggests that there is a radical conflict of principle between magic and religion, the former being simply based on a mistaken association of ideas by similarity and by contiguity, and assuming as its most fundamental notion that the world is governed not by spirits or gods but by unconscious impersonal powers which act mechanically as immutable laws of nature, while the latter regards the current of events and the course of human life as being directed by superhuman beings, whose good-will man may woo by means of prayer and sacrifice. Taken thus in the sense of a propitiation of superhuman powers, religion may surely stand in fundamental antagonism to magic, but, on the other hand, it is very doubtful if the primitive type of magic can ever be practised where there is no belief, however crude and rudimentary, in spirits, or at least in 'numinous' beings endowed with some mysterious power, who, accord-

ingly, are moved to action not in the manner of the rigid and invariable processes of nature but rather in ways which baffle and frustrate ordinary comprehension creating thereby the feeling of awe and reverence in the mind of primitive man.

On Frazer's view, religious and magical rites are of an altogether different character from each other; and to utter prayers and incantations in the same breath (as it happens, for instance, with the Melanesians described by R. A. Codrington,) is to commit a flagrant theoretical inconsistency of behaviour. But regarded from the view-point of the linguist, there is no radical difference of principle recognizable between magic and religion, since the fundamental linguistic structure of spells and incantations on the one hand, and that of prayers and rituals on the other, are substantially the same, their differences lying not in essentials but largely on the surface, and being explicable quite appropriately in terms of the phases of evolution of an exactly identical type of language. Moreover, this seems to fit in better with the more recent trend in the science of religious origins which, instead of postulating an absolute distinction between magic and religion, proceeds by examining, comparing and classifying all types of worship actually met with among various races of mankind through the ages and over the world, and accords the name of 'primitive religion' to animism as well as to the so-called Mana-worship, that is, recognizes these two as the most primitive and elementary forms of religion from which even the highest religions have slowly and gradually grown up. Both magic and religion, in this view, spring from the common taproot of Mana, a mysterious, supernatural power which on this account may rightly be characterized as magico-religious; it is, we are told, from the belief in this numinous potency running through all the phenomena of nature that magic and religion ultimately draw their origin (cf. John Murphy, op. cit. Chap. VIII).

All things considered, it seems best to remain content with a provisional definition which will prove most useful for our descriptive purposes, and which will comprise everything that may be called magic (white and black), witchcraft, or sorcery, without any attempt at discriminating them rigidly and absolutely from religious beliefs and practices. We shall bring, then, under the head of magic all those actions by which man seeks to wield at will the course of nature and to influence all beings, ranging from the lowliest animals up to gods, and including—though this might sound queer on first hearing—even himself. These actions constitute magical rite in the broadest sense, and for their efficacy they depend largely on miraculous powers believed to be inherent in certain articles, words, or gestures which are involved as their kernel parts. In the case of religion as distinguished from magic, the efficacy of these processes is usually made to be dependent not so much on the will of man himself as on the absolute will of some higher power working behind the visible screen of nature. But the difference is, at least from our specific point of view, rather irrelevant and may conveniently left out of account. Arguing along these lines, we might regard linguistic magic as a particular

type of magic in which words and sentences, supposed to be bearers of dreadful might, that is, in the capacity of charms, spells, incantations and the like, are made to play the leading part in processes of the sort just described for bringing about the desired result, be it the benefit or the injury of individuals, the welfare of the community, or the supplication and propitiation of some power in the universe far surpassing that of man himself.

Now this belief in the vital power of the spoken word is one of the most salient characteristics of the primitive type of mind. In fact, among the ancients and the primitives the notion of the spoken word as a mystical force plays so prominent a role that it is no exaggeration to say that it stamps the whole trend of their life with the impress of verbal magic. So great and irresistible is this power believed to be that the magician adept in the art of manipulating his verbal tool is expected to accomplish practically everything desired. But it must be borne in mind that in primitive society all men are more or less magicians. Early man had constant recourse to the processes of verbal magic for astonishingly diverse purposes: to secure the country's or the tribe's prosperity, to regulate the processes of nature with a view to ensuring the fertility of his cattle and the fruitfulness of food-plants, to prevent and cure diseases or to cause them, to repel noxious animals, to work the death of an enemy, to avert and ward off the assaulting powers of evil with which—so he believed—the air was filled, to win the heart of a girl, and so on almost without end. Even the notion of constraining and coercing the gods in his favour by the utterance of spells was not at all far-fetched to the mind of early man. The magicians and sorcerers of ancient Egypt, not content to prostrate before the high divinities humbly imploring their aid, often sought instead to prevail upon them by threats and intimidation (see H. Grapow, *Bedrohungen*, Ä. Z. 1911).

But the denizens of heaven, on their part, could little dispense with the use of magic and magical words. In Egypt as well as in Babylonia, the high divinities wore amulets and talismans for protection, and themselves used various magical means for the attainment of their ends. The great god of Babylon, Marduk, was 'the magician of the gods'. Similarly the god Thout of Egypt was the master of sorcery. It is worth noting here that in these cases of divine magic too, the word with its inherent miraculous power was the chief instrument in the hands of the gods. Every word uttered by them took effect as magic; and once uttered it was unalterable and irresistible. 'As surely as rain and snow', declares the Second Isaiah (the prophet here is speaking in the name of Yahweh, as his mouthpiece), 'that fall from heaven never return there without having watered the earth until it yields seed for the sower and bread for the hungry, so my Word that goes forth from my mouth shall not return unto me in vain without having worked out what I desired and without having carried out that for which I dispatched it' (Is. 55, 10-11). We know that the canonical liturgies used in Isin and Hammurabi

periods, usually contained among other things a special hymn to the divine Word (Enem). Here is a characteristic passage from a very old prayer to the Moon-God;

As for thee, thy word, when it passes on high like the wind, brings
pasturage and drink plenteously in the land.
As for thee, when thy word is issued on the earth, the sweet-smelling
plants are produced
As for thee, thy word makes fat sheepfold and cattle-stall, enlarging
the creatures with the breath of life.
As for thee, thy word causes justice and righteousness to be so that
the people speak truthfully.
As for thee, thy word is far-away in heaven, it is hidden in the earth,
which no man has seen.
As for thee, thy word who comprehends it?

(Langdon, *Babylonian Penitential Psalms* p.9-10)

Considering such profound importance attached to the compelling force of the spoken word, it is not to be wondered at if among the ancients the gods are often represented as ruling the world by the oral rites of magic, and the origin of the universe ascribed to the creative activity of the holy word. The idea that the gods govern the world through magical formulae is a favourite one to the authors of the Rigvedic hymns (cf. H. Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda* p.66 ff). Equally common among ancient peoples is the inverse of this belief, namely that the supra-sensuous power residing in certain forms of words is even over the gods as well. And in fact, among the Aryans of early India the conception of gods as subject to control by the magician-priest who could chant and recite incantations in the right way seems to have been very early developed.

As regards the conception of God who creates the world by means of language it is so familiar to us from the teaching of the Old Testament that no words need be wasted on it here. Let it suffice to note that long before the Israelites (or even more generally, the Semites) emerged into the light of history, the Sumerians had held the doctrine that everything that exists was created by the Word of the god Enki. V. K. Gokak, in his book *The Poetic Approach to Language* (Chap. VI), has stressed the point that there was white magic in the formula 'Let there be light!' inasmuch as it was the vehicle of the divine will strong enough to make the object spring into existence as soon as the word was uttered. In point of fact it does not suffice to see the divine will working behind the word; it must be observed that in the belief of early man the word itself is, in such a context, an independent, personal agent of the holy will. In the above-cited passage from Isaiah (and in innumerable others similar to it to be found in the magico-religious literature of various peoples) the divine word is considered a living entity, almost a supersensuous personality;

we have a striking example of this phenomenon in the well-known case of 'Memra' of the post-exilic Jews.

In ancient India, as early as in the Vedic religion, we see "Vāc", i. e. Word, already raised into a personal object of worship and veneration: a goddess who, primarily as the voice of the sacrificial hymn, serves as the sole means of communication between heaven and earth and embraces and unites all things that have voice in nature. In the tenth Book of the *Rigvēda* a whole hymn is dedicated to the celebration of this 'Queen' who 'holds together all existence' and who 'beyond this wide earth and beyond the heavens has become so mighty in her grandeur' (X, 125. See also X, 71). Later on in the *Brāhmaṇas*, this same Vac is sometimes extolled even as the supreme director and creator of the whole world. We may add, as further evidence of this tendency in the human mind towards personifying or deifying the sacred word, that the Indian deity Brahma who, along with Vishnu and Shiva makes up in Hinduism the much venerated Trimurti, and is often addressed as the supreme Creator, was originally no independent god at all in the Vedic pantheon, but was, according to the now widely accepted theory of Hubert and Mauss, simply some mysterious power supposed to be operating in the spell or the prayer, and only with steadily increasing ascendancy of the priestly caste after the Rigvedic age with its exclusive claim to the knowledge of the sacred sacrificial formulae, gradually came to be elevated to such a predominant position in the religious life of the people.

These strange notions concerning the magical function of language, which are strikingly incongruous and repelling to the critical intellingence, are nevertheless quite of a piece with primitive modes of thought, and, on reflection, even with the general mental framework and constitution of at least the great majority of mankind. This has an important bearing upon the very nature of our language, and is therefore worthy of a few moments' attention.

As we shall see more fully later, the constitution of our primary world of reality depends in large measure upon the structural patterns of our own language. What common-sense believes to be the concrete, objective reality proves, upon a closer inspection, to be largely a product of our linguistic habits. Language pervades and penterates all our experience; it is so deeply embedded in, and so closely interwoven with, the very tissue of 'reality' as we experience it that it seems practically impossible for us to look at the outer world except through the looking-glass of language. In short, language and reality are, at least at the level of common experience, fused into one. The full significance of this fact for the main subject of this book will become apparent only in later chapters. Here we shall simply note that this sort of close correspondence between the structure of language and the structure of the world as it confronts our eyes is of course beyond the reach of man in the lower grades of intellectual development. But the primitive type of

mind tends to posit instead another kind of intimate relationship between language and reality, that, to wit, of casuality. As we shall see presently, this is induced by the universal tendency of the human mind to confuse the sign and the thing signified.

Nothing is so wide-spread than the feeling that word and thing are identical, or that there exists some mysterious natural correspondence between the two. Scholars working in various fields of study have unanimously recognized that among primitive people as well as among our own children, words, far from being mere labels attached to things, are themselves real objects, or even represent the essential, integral parts of the objects. The word is the very 'soul' of the thing.

For the scientifically trained moderns, words are nothing more than conventional signs; that is to say, the relation between an object and the word which serves as its symbol is principally external and arbitrary, though in the case of onomatopoetic and other more or less 'motivated' words there may be some sort of natural connection between them. Words, at any rate, are not things on the same level as non-verbal, material things; nor are they properties or attributes inherent in the things; much less are they 'spiritual things' as Whitman and Goethe in their mystical intoxication imagined them to be; they are external, non-natural labels, neither more nor less. 'We employ words,' A. B. Johnson remarked, 'as though they possess, like specie, an intrinsic and natural value; rather than as though they possess, like bank notes, a merely conventional, artificial, and representative value. We must convert our words into the natural realities which the words represent, if we would understand accurately their value.' (*Treatise on Language*, 1836, p.152) This process of conversion is exacly the contrary of what primitives are accustomed to do. For them, words *are* things which are as concrete as material objects, bodily actions, and physical events. So it comes about that in a number of ancient languages, the notion of word and the notion of event or thing are represented by one and the same term, a phenomenon so familiar to the readers of the Old Testament. The Israelites make practically no distinction whatsoever between the thing, the name, and the idea. Moreover they equate word and action. The result is that in Hebrew the most ordinary term for 'word' ('dābhār' or its synonym "ōmer") is in fact a semantic complex meaning at the same time word, thing, matter, affair, action, deed, event etc., and one and the same verb "dibbēr" which is derived from the identical root <dbr> is constantly used in the sense of speaking and in the sense of behaving. In Arabic, the term "amr" meaning properly 'the word of command' or 'order'—the corresponding verb is "amara", which means 'to order' 'to command', and etymologically belongs to the same root as the Hebrew verb "āmar" 'to say' which is also used in the sense of 'commanding' (Job. 9, 7, Ne. 13, 9, IIChr. 24, 8, Ps. 109, 34, etc,)— is the commonest word used in the sense of 'thing', 'event', 'affair', or 'case'. Moreover, in the old idiom of the desert Arabs, the verb 'to say' "qāla" seems to have been used for all sorts of actions where no use of the tongue is involved. Alfred Guillaume (*Prophecy and Divination*, p. 173) has

drawn attention to a very curious fact that, according to Ibn al-Athīr, the Beduin used to say, for instance 'He spoke with his hand' ("Qāla bi-yadi-hi") in the sense of 'he took', and 'He spoke with his foot' ("Qāla bi-rijli-hi") in the sense of 'he walked', and so forth. In Accadian, likewise, "amātu" contains meanings of 'word' 'thing', and 'event'. Similarly in Ethiopian the same word "nagar" means both 'speech' and 'thing'. The same applies to the Sumerian word "inim"—or "enim" "enem"—, a real semantic conglomerate representing as it does a complex total conception which our later analytic mind would feel urged to split up into at least four distinct concepts, 'word', 'incantation', 'thing', and 'affair'. (It may be remarked by the way that the most ordinary term in Sumerian for 'spell', "en", is in all probability derived from this word.) For the ancient Japanese, in like manner, there was no difference between the spoken word and the matter, and consequently the same term "koto" did duty for both.

If, among primitive people, the word is thus completely identified with the matter, it would be but a step further for them to regard the word as something living and spiritual, something endowed with a soul. The blessing and curse which are so important in the life of primitives, and which are indeed found in closely parallel forms wherever there is man, are only conceivable on the ground of some such belief in the mysterious soul-power of the word. In primitive circumstances, formulas of the type 'Thou art blessed!' are not formal words of greeting, expressive only of the kindly wishes for the future; similarly, 'Thou art cursed!' are not stereotyped forms of speech denoting the hatred and disgust on the part of the speaker. They are living substances which act and work real goods and real evils. When a man has invoked a blessing upon another, the words penetrate into the very soul of that person and create there prosperity and peace. Contrariwise, when a man speaks evil words to his neighbour, the horrible curse takes root at once in the victim's soul, grows up there, goes on gnawing it and finally makes it 'light', i. e. completely emptied of its substance. It may be remarked that in Hebrew the ordinary verb meaning 'to curse' is "qillēl", that is 'to make light <qal>'. (Cf. Johs Pedersen, *Israel, its Life and Culture*, vol. 1, p. 99ff., p.411, ff.)

A striking example of this belief in the efficacy of the magical power of the word is seen in the 'Word-soul' ("koto-dama") of the early Japanese. Their spiritual life as depicted in the *Manyō-shū*, the oldest anthology of Japanese poetry containing mainly poems of the 7th and 8th centuries, is almost entirely dominated by this sort of magical conception of language. They believed that the Country of Yamato, that is Japan, was the only country in the world where words could work in the way just described. They boastfully called their land 'the country supported by word-souls' ("koto-dama no tasukuru kuni") (*Manyō-shū* XIII, 3254) or 'the country where word-souls flourish' ("koto dama no sakihafu kuni") (ibid. V, 894). In their eyes, the effectiveness of magical words was a proof of the supreme favour which a nation enjoyed in the sight of its gods, and they thought that there was no such country besides their

native land. They were very proud of it; it even seems to have become the ultimate source of their strong national feeling. They were utterly ignorant of the fact that all their primitive neighbours were living in countries where the word-souls worked no less vigorously.

Closely allied to this phenomenon is the equally wide-spread tendency among peoples of crude culture to regard the names of men—not to speak of the names of the gods—with superstitous or almost religious awe. How deep-rooted this superstition is in the mental frame of man will easily be seen from the fact that it still prevails in full force among civilized people to-day. Thousands of highly cultured persons believe that the fortunes of the individual is inseparably bound up with the good or bad nature of his name. For reasons unknown to the ordinary man, certain names are essentially auspicious and others inauspicious. In the primitive stage of thought, the personal name of a man is an integral part of his soul; the whole of his being fills it; it is the very substance of his soul, it is himself. To know the name of a man means therefore to know his real essence, and to grasp his soul. So the primitive is generally very careful to conceal his personal name for fear that it should fall into the hands of an ill-wisher or some other malignant beings hovering around him; for in that case, the latter are supposed to be in a position to work through his name whatever magic they like on his soul-substance.

Thus among the Ainus, the aboriginal people of Japan now living in the northernmost part of the country, no woman dares to disclose to a stranger the real appellation of her husband, greatly to the annoyance of the government officials who visit their villages to take a census of population. In ancient Japan, to know the name of another or to tell one's own to other people was regarded as an important affair. Particularly women were extremely careful not to disclose their personal name; in point of fact no one except their husband—and of course their own parents—was entitled to know it; this is so in the Manyo age (7th and 8th centuries) but there are some reasons for presuming that in still older ages, such was also the case with man. In the opening poem of the *Manyō*-anthology, attributed to the Emperor Yūraku (418-79 A. D.), the poet-emperor addresses a little girl picking herbs on a hill-side with the following words: 'How I desire to know your family! Do tell me (your name)! Over the limitless coutry of Yamato, far and wide I reign, Over all the land I rule. As for me, I am ready to disclose to you both my family and my name.' All this, in plain language, simply amounst to saying, 'Do become my wife! I am quite willing to be your husband'.

Unfortunately the text, as handed down to us, appears to be corrupt in some minute places, and consequently, as to the exact way of reading the whole piece there is still difference of opinion among the native philologists. There can be no reasonable doubt, however, that the poem, as a whole, faithfully reflects the remarkable custom of courtship that prevailed among the Manyo-men. Besides, we have further evidence in support of this interpretation, In ancient Japanese one of the

most ordinary terms for wooing or courtship is "yobahi", the nominal form of the verb "yobafu" which is in its turn a *lengthened*, i. e. the conative or continuative, mode of the basal verb "yobu" meaning 'to call' or 'to declare loudly (one's name)'. The word vividly depicts the custom of those far-off days, when a man who fell in love with a girl and wished to pay his court to her, had first of all to visit her abode where she was living secluded with her mother, and to declare loudly and repeatedly his personal name going round the house, in expectance of her response. Not infrequently this had to continue for days; in that case it was termed "yobahi-wataru", that is, 'to continue calling'. If the girl, on her part, deigned to accept his 'calling', she disclosed to him her real name which she had jealously guarded against being known even to her own brothers. In Book XLL of the *Manyō-shū* we have a very interesting short poem by a girl, giving direct reference to this curious custom of courtship: 'I would like to tell you the name by which my dear mother addresses me,' she says, 'but how could I, when you are but a passer-by whose name I do not know yet?' These are, no doubt, words of reproach addressed to a man who, out of impatience, neglected the indispensable ceremony of telling her his own name first and dared to ask her to disclose her name. (cf. Origuchi, *Saiko Nihon-no Josei Seikatsu-no Kontei*, 折口信夫「最古日本の女性生活の根抵」'Basis of Japanese Women's Life in the Most Ancient Times'.) All this, in short, arose from the fact that to the view of early man, the name and the soul were one and the same thing. If the man was so anxious to know the name of the girl he was in love with, that was only because he had, otherwise, no means of uniting his soul with hers. And if, on the other hand, the girl spared no pains to conceal her name, that was because the man who took possession of her name took thereby possession of her real self.

Now we might expect that, if this was true even of the names of simple mortals, still more must it have been true of the sacred names of gods or other supernatural beings. And in fact, everywhere in the ancient world we find divine names regarded as mysterious things invested with terrible powers, which may inflict severe punishments for being treated negligently. The name of Yahweh was, for instance, to the view of the Israelites, Yahweh Himself, or even more than that; it was the soul of Yahweh, the very spiritual essence of Yahweh that actively manifested itself before the beloved nation. So, when the Hebrew prophets spoke 'in the name of Yahweh' (bĕ shēm Yahveh), or the Arabian prophet Mahomet 'in the name of Allah' (b-ismi 'llāh), it meant more than speaking in accordance with the divine will. It implied, as Johs Pedersen has shown (op. cit. p. 245 ff.), that they spoke with something of God's soul in them; that they became possessed of the supernatural power to speak strong (i. e. magically efficacious) words.

This being so, it is not for everybody to mention at random the divine name. Of course the name grows and prospers by being constantly mentioned and uttered; so Yahweh wants his name to be loudly extolled. But it should be done in

the right places, in the right way, and chiefly by persons fully entitled to it. As is well-known, the misuse of the sacred name was strongly forbidden in the early law of the Old Testament: 'You shall not take my name in vain, profaning thereby the name of your God; I am Yahweh your God'. (*Lev.* 19, 12) Similar customs are prevalent among various savage tribes to-day. Every time the real name of the god is pronounced, the god is so to speak, forced to appear before the utterer of his name, and this is of course very dangerous. There is also the fear of the god being subjected to the malicious will of some sorcerer through the blasphemous misuse of his sacred name; for he who can call the god by his true name is supposed to be able to exert a controlling power over the god himself. That is why many primitive people refuse to reveal the true name of their deity to strangers, and when it is necessary to refer to him, take the prudent caution to have recourse to circumlocutions. This brings us into the domain of taboo-words.

It is a commonplace now among linguistists to mention, as a typical example of verbal superstition, the phenomenon of taboo-words. Taboo, or 'negative magic', as it has rightly been called, is, in the specific case of language. a set of negative precepts applied to the use of certain words of ominous associations with a view to avoiding or warding off mysterious, dangerous forces which may be released by the utterance of these words. In Japanese, taboo-words are called "imikotoba", which means 'sacred-word' — 'sacred' being taken here in the original twofold sense of holiness and pollution. The early Japanese had a plenty of them, and even to-day these still continue in survivals among farmers, hunters, and merchants. All sorts of euphemistic substitutes for the "imikotoba" have naturally been developed, thus among the hunters "yama-kotoba", that is, 'mountain-words', and among the fishers "oki-kotoba", that is, 'offing-words'. When out on hunting or on fishing, these people scrupulously avoid mentioning the names of some specific animals or fishes, and, if need arises, these are referred to by circumlocutory words and phrases which are believed to be harmless. Among the *Matagi* hunting clans (the north-east of Japan), the rules of linguistic taboo are still strictly observed; the bear, for instance, is, "Kuro-ge" (black hair), the wolf "yase" (the slim), the rice "Kusa-no mi" (grass-fruit), the snake "naga mushi" (long worm), etc. (cf. *Minzoku Gaku Jiten*, 「民俗学辞典」Ethnographical Dictionary, comp. by K. Yanagida, 柳田国男 Tokyo.) These are examples of the 'mountain-words.' It would be interesting to note in this connection that, according to K. Kindaichi, one of the leading authorities in Japanese philology, it was probably due to some such cause that the Japanese language lost its word for one of the key events of human life, death. (金田一京助 「規範文法から歴史文法へ」*Kihan Bunpo kara Rekishi Bunpo e* 'From Normative to Historical Grammar' 9.) In his opinion, the original Japanese word meaning 'to die' was completely lost before the historic era, leaving behind an euphemistic substitute, namely the verb "shi-nu", which has remained till our own day the only authentic word in that meaning, but which literally means something like 'to have done

completely', "shi-nu" being analysed into "shi"-"i"-"nu". Whether this argument can be accepted without reserve, may very well be doubted. But most people would probably admit that this is at least a possible view. Be that as it may, it is certain that already in a very early age this word came to be felt dangerous; it was naturally struck by a taboo ban, and various elaborate ways have been devtsed to fence off the ominous effect that might be produced by the utterance of the word. Finally, through the curious working of the law of association, all those words which, though having properly nothing to do with it, could by the mere play of chance be reminders of that word have come to be considered very ominous. Whatever smells of death is an agent of death; and so it happens that the number 4 "shi", for instance, having by pure accident exactly the same name as death "shi", is regarded by the vast majority of people as the most unlucky number. It may be noteworthy that this is not in the least confined to the rustic and uneducated portions of the population; thousands of otherwise quite rational people are still somewhat afraid of the nefarious effect of this number, or at least show intense scrupulousness about handling it in the right way. A limitless number of other curious examples could easily be adduced from all quarters of the globe. But the phenomenon itself is now so familiar to us, and so much work has already been done on the subject that it is not necessary to present long arguments about it here.

It should be remembered that the various forms of linguistic superstition that have been enumerated are so to speak but special cases of a more fundamental principle, namely, the view common to all mankind in the earlier stages of intellectual development that all speech in itself and as a whole is sacred, and that all names have some mysterious magic virtue. The ominous words discussed above are nothing but particularly conspicuous cases of this general fact; properly speaking, all words are more or less ominous. To the mind of early man it is not some particular words, not particular sentences that are dangerous, but—at least under certain circumstances to be discussed later (Ch.X) — every word, every sentence, in short, all speaking is awful and sacred. There is, strictly speaking, no trivial word. For the ancients as well as for the primitives, to speak, i. e. to utter speech sounds, to pronounce the names of things, means something not to be made light of. For the speech, once uttered from the mouth, calls forth some hidden force from the—seemingly—most ordinary and innocent objects and persons, powerfully influences the course of natural and human events, and, in many cases, may give entrance to the peril. To state or declare something to be so and so means at once to make the object actually so and so. In Hebrew, for instance, the causative form of the verb (the so-called Hiphil form) does not distinguish between declaring and making. When an Israelite declares someone to be right "hiṣdiq", that person is made actually right "ṣaddiq". In Hebrew grammar this is called the declaratory use of the causative, and is very frequently used.

Speech, then, in primitive thought, is a highly beneficent, but at the same time,

tremendously dangerous thing. Speaking of the Greek feast of Anthesteria, Gilbert Murray writes: 'We must avoid speaking dangerous words; in great moments we must avoid speaking any words at all, lest there should be even in the most innocent of them some unknown danger.' (*Five Stages of Greek Religion* p. 50) We have mentioned above that in a number of ancient and primitive languages, one and the same term is used for both 'word' and 'thing'. It may be interesting to observe another tendency which runs parallel to it: in many languages the term for 'word' itself has an intense magical or ceremonial connotation. Thus in Sumerian, as we have seen, the same term "inim" is used alternately in the sense of 'word' and in the sense of 'spell' or 'incantation'. This is particularly conspicuous in the case of early Japanese. Here the two principal words for speaking "noru" and "ifu" have both undeniable magical associations; there floats around them a ceremonial, if not sinister, atmosphere which pervade and penetrate them. The original meaning of the verb "noru" is to utter strong words, that is, to try to realize something through an invocation to the magical power of the word-soul. All its derivatives have invariably something to do with magical process: "i-noru" meaning 'to pray', "noro-fu" 'to call down a curse', and "nori-to" 'a ritual'. The other verb "ifu" which is to-day the most ordinary term for saying, was also originally closely connected with the act of uttering magical or ritual formulas. Its derivative "iha-fu" has preserved to this day something of this original meaning. The word "iha-fu" now means simply 'to celebrate', or 'to congratulate' but originally it meant a ritual act of consecration, namely to worship the divinity by means of ritual ceremonies, especially by the repeated recitation of necessary magical formulae, in order to enter into the state of religious purity.

Words once spoken cannot be recalled; the uttered word becomes independent of the utterer and has an uncontrollable activity of its own. In our own day we often experience the same thing in the so-called slips of the tongue which may, in case some grave consequence is involved, call forth severe social sanction. But among primitives it means more than that. It literally implies the magical release of irrevocable power which travels about in the air, and whose working no one can arrest until it completely attains its fulfillment. And of course, if the word uttered happens to be of an ominous nature, the supernatural forces which its utterance has released are sure to act on their victims and bring about horrible results. Then the utterer himself, even if he were an able magician, even if he were a prophet of God, and however much he repents and recoginizes his error, can never recall the uttered word. 'My heart is troubled as morning mist', sings a poet of *Manyō-shū*, 'but I cannot with impunity express it in words.' (*Manyō-shū* XVII, 4008). When one is sad, one must keep the sadness in his heart; if not, something terrible will inevitably happen.

Chapter III

THE SACRED BREATH

In order to penetrate to the deepest root of the strange notions current among primitive people as to the magical power of language, with a view to understanding them, as it were, from inside, we must, in the first place, make an attempt to trace them all to their common theoretical (if not chronological) source; and for that purpose it would be necessary to begin at the very beginning of linguistic activity. Now since all speech, needless to say, is a vocal activity and presupposes as such the process of breathing, a good starting-point will be furnished by a consideration of how magical thinking deals with the phenomenon of breath and breathing. We shall presently see that the belief in the sacredness of the breath provides in fact the theoretical ground on which all sorts of verbal superstitions can ultimately be based.

Anthropologists have repeatedly called attention to a noteworthy fact that, in the belief of many primitive peoples, the gist of magical recitations lies in the 'voice' of the magician. It is the voice, i. e. the breath, that actualizes the magical force contained in potency in the word and launches it in whatever direction the magician desires. It is in the breath that the main virtue of all verbal magic is believed to reside. The word, so long as it is not actually pronounced, must of necessity remain slumbering and inactive; only when carried by the breath can it become efficacious, and even capable of unchaining the powers of darkness. So we see everywhere magicians attaching the profoundest importance to the process of the 'catching up' of the voice in magical ceremonies. Describing the garden magic in the Trobriand Islands, Malinowski writes: 'a mat is spread on the bedstead, and on this mat another is laid. The herbs are placed on one half of the second mat, the other being folded over them. Into this opening the magician chants his spell. His mouth is quite close to the edges of the mat, so that none of his voice can go astray; all enters the yawning mat, where the herbs are placed, awaiting to be imbued with the spell'. (*Baloma; The Spirits of the Dead.* V). This is done because the magician's breath, according to the magical way of thinking, is the chief medium by which the supernormal power of the magic is generated and carried to its objective. These considerations would seem to suggest that in primitive thought the miracle-working property of language lies not so much in the intrinsic virtue of the word itself as in the mysterious nature of the breath which is capable of bringing it to actuality.

The belief in the sacredness of the breath goes back to a very remote past when

animism made its first emergence among our ancestors. Now animism, as distinguished from the *Mana* type of religion in R. R. Marett's terminology, originates when and where man begins to believe in the existence of Soul or Spirit distinctly separate from the body. Even at this stage of spiritual development primitive people very often fall short of a clean-cut notion of the 'soul', but the important point to note, on the other hand, is that practically everywhere they show a remarkable tendency to visualize the disembodied soul as something of breath-nature. The ideas of the soul and the breath are, to primitive reflection, so intimately interrelated that practically it is impossible to draw any sharp line of demarcation between the two. This is reflected in the fact that among many peoples 'breath' is frequently used as synonymous with 'soul', 'spirit', and 'life': "psykhē", "pneuma" in Greek, "anima", "spiritus" in Latin, "ātman", "prāṇa" in Sanscrit, "duh" in Russian, "rūah" "nephesh" in Hebrew, and many others. Thus in every case, the apparently vague concept of the human soul goes back to the sensory representation of the physical breath. The breath of a man, in short, is his soul.

It will be interesting to note in this connection that in Arabic one and the same root "n. f. s." has generated two words standing closely connected with each other: "nafs" (soul) and "nafas" (breath). The Hebrew word "nephes" is also derived from the same root; originally it meant 'breath', but in a great number of passages of the Old Testament it is used in the sense of 'life', 'self', or 'soul'. Indeed, so predominant did this latter sense come to be that in the later stage of Biblical Hebrew, another word "nᵉshāmāh" came into use to denote 'breath' specifically, as in the famous passage of the Creation story (*Gen.* 2, 7), where we read: 'God moulded man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life* (nishmash khayīm) and man became a *living soul* (nephesh khayyāh).' As regards the other Hebrew term for the soul "ruāh", it may be observed that its original meaning was 'wind' or 'breath', these two notions being entirely cofused, as is often the case among ancients and primitives — see for example the Latin term "anima" with a sensory connotation of 'wind'. This is manifest from its etymological relationship with the Greek word "anemos" 'wind')—; but later on it came to designate the human soul. Concerning the Greek term "psykhē", an interesting attempt has been made by E. Bickel (*Homerischer Seelenglaube*) to show that this word, —though its predominant meaning in Homer is already an abstract idea of 'life',— must have meant at an earlier stage of the language quite literally the 'soul as breath or exhalation,' and that it is precisely this original meaning of the exhalation-soul that accounts for the Homeric belief that the soul flies away from the body at death.

Old Chinese offers here an illuminating parallel. I mean the word 'ch'i' 気, one of the commonest terms in Chinese whose exact mening, however, is very difficult to ascertain, comprising as it does such varied senses as 'weather', 'vapour', 'physical energy', 'principle of life', 'life', 'breath', 'spirit', 'soul', etc. It is, we

may assume, a half-material, half-spiritual life-power, the *élan vital*, so to speak, working in and through all Nature, including man. In Kuan-tzŭ 管子 (spuriously attributed to a noted statesman Kuang Chung 管仲 who died in 645 B. C.) we read: 'So it comes about that whenever there is "ch'i" there is life, and whenever there is no more "ch'i" there is death; all living beings live through their "ch'i".' (*Shu Yen P'ien*) Similarly Chuang-tzŭ 莊子: 'Since life is the companion of death, and death is the beginning of life, no one knows which is the principle of which. The human life is neither more nor less than the "ch'i" gathered together; when gathered, there is life, when scattered there is death.' (*Chih Pei Yu*).

It will be noteworthy that in *Shuo Wen Chieh Tzŭ*, Hsü Shên 許慎 states that the original form of the letter "ch'i" 氣 is a symbolical representation of "yun ch'i" 雲気, i. e. 'cloud-energy'. We cannot of course strain too much this explanation which is in fact too succinct to tell us anything definite about the word. But we may, on the other hand, take it fairly certain that the ancient Chinese visualized the "ch'i" as something cloud-like. That this way of representing the 'life-soul' has nothing disturbing about it may be shown by the fact that analogous ideas are often met with among uncivilized people; it is reported, for instance, that among Tyrolese peasants a good man's soul is believed to issue from his mouth at death 'like a little white cloud' (cf. E. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 433). It is probable that in the case of the Chinese word "ch'i", the 'cloud', as some scholars have conjectured, symbolizes 'breath', and this moreover may well be the original meaning of the word. With rather more probability, however, the symbol may be simply picturing the ascending energy of clouds. The analysis of the ideographic symbol for 'soul', "hun" 魂 seems to afford a striking confirmation of this view. The ideogram 魂, as one sees, is composed of two parts placed side by side, one (鬼) picturing a dead person or corpse and the other (云) a cloud under heaven. This perhaps suggests that the Chinese of the earliest times thought of the soul as 'life-breath' which escapes the dying person and goes up to heaven like a cloud, a conception bearing a close resemblance to the Greek one of the "psykhe" 'flying out of the mouth' of a person at death. (cf. Sh. Koyangi 小柳司気太, *Zoku Toyō Shisō-no Kenkyu* 「続東洋思想の研究」'Studies in Oriental Thoughts', second series II).

Be that as it may, the close association of Breath-Life-Soul is, in this case too, very evident,. We may cite here a very curious passage of *Li Chi* 礼記 'Book of Rites' where we read the following piece of conversation held precisely on this subject between Confucius and one of his disciples, Tsai Wo. 'Tsai Wo said, "I have often heard the names of "kui" 鬼 and "shen" 神, but I do not know what they really mean." The Master replied, "what is called "ch'i" 気 is the principal function of the "shen" (i. e. the consciousness-soul), and what is generally known as the sensitive faculty is the principal function of the "kui" (i. e. the corporeal soul, or life-soul). ····All living beings must necessarily die; once dead, they

must necessarily return to the earth. This (element which goes back to the earth) is what is called "kui". Flesh and bones perish and disapear to be transformed into the earth of the field. Only the "ch'i" of the dead ascends to heaven and assumes there a glorious from".' (*Chi I P'ien*). It will be profitably remarked in addition that the famous commentator Chêng Hsüan 鄭玄 says of the term in question "ch'i" that it properly designates the double process of respiration: inhalation and exhalation.

We must call to mind at this point that the 'cloud'-like soul of man, according to animistic beliefs, resides not merely in the heart but dwells in various parts of his body such as his hair, skin, teeth, blood, intestines and so on. Commenting on the following words of the *Koran*: 'and when I (i. e. Allah) have fashioned him (i. e. the first man, Adam) and breathed into him of my Spirit……', al-Baiḍāwī remarks that this means that 'the power of the breath premeated the cavities of Adam's body and he became alive', and adds further: 'The breathing here means properly to let the wind run through the cavities of some other person's body. The spirit "rūḥ" depends above all on the ethereal vapour "al-bukhārā al-laṭīf" emanating from the heart; it becomes charged with the vital force (of the heart) and carries it through the arteries into every depth of the body.' (al-Baiḍāwī, *Anwār at-Tanzīl wa-Asrār at-Ta'wīl*, S. XV, 29).

It will be quite natural that the soul-stuff should, on these assumptions, be supposed to escape through every opening of the body. Saliva, sweat, tears, all are imagined to convey something of the soul-stuff out of the body. Particularly dangerous are sneezing, spitting, yawning, blowing, or touching; for on such occasions the ethereal vapour of life residing in man may be made to gush out very easily. This is most probably the reason for pious ejaculations by Moslems immediately after sneezing or yawning (cf. Zwemer, *Studies in Popular Islam*, II); the original intention underlying the use of sacred formulae here is to prevent the soul from issuing through the open mouth or nostrils. We may mention in passing that among primitive people the act of blowing is frequently counted among the most dangerous means of witchcraft. One of the earliest Meccan Surahs of the *Koran*, known as the *Chapter of Daybreak*, which is undoubtedly an anti-magical prayer for protection from fears proceeding from the evils of malignant witchcraft, depicts in a very vivid way this age-old custom:

> Say: I seek refuge to the Lord of daybreak
> From the evil of whst is created
> From the evil of the darkness as it cometh on
> And from the evil of the blowers upon the knots,
> And from the evil of the envious when he envieth

The fourth verse speaking of 'the blowers upon the knot's "an-naffāthātu fi l-'uqad" refers to the very wide-spread custom of witches who, 'in the darkness of night when it is intense', tie knots in string and blow upon them with imprecatory words in order to injure the persons they hate and envy.

We are now in a position to understand the reason why in the world of animistic practice the human voice is universally considered so sacred and awful. If the soul-stuff of man may be so easily sent out of his bodily frame, still more must this be the case with his breath, for a man's breath, as we have just seen, is, in primitive mode of thinking, even directly identified with his soul. And if, further, the soul-breath may escape through sneezing, yawning, or blowing, the same can hardly fail to happen in the act of uttering the voice; every time a man utters a voice, something of his soul is sure to go out of his body.

The primeval conception that he who breathes breathes forth from himself, breathes out of the inner substance of the soul, is far from being entirely dead among us; it has remained alive throughout the history of humanity and even today it is still living in full vigour at least in the consciousness of some of our eminent poets. *Atmen, du unsichtbares Gedicht*! 'Breathing, thou invisible poem!' writes R. M. Rilke in one of his *Sonnets to Orpheus*. Closely similar ideas are encountered in the works of Paul Claudel. For these poets, as well as for our primeval ancestors, man breathes every moment out of himself (*Wir atmen uns aus und dahin*); respiration is a continuous loss of our inner substance. Or, to speak more exactly. at every act of inhalation or in-breathing we take in something of the air—which, by the way, is, to the mind of primitive man, already fully animate, as can be seen clearly from a fragment of the Greek philosopher Anaximenes (B 2), for example, that reads: 'Just as our "psyche", which is air, holds us together and rules us, so do "pneuma" and air encompass the whole cosmos' (cf. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*, Chap. V) — while at every act of exhalation or out-breathing something of our soul goes out and evaporates into the surrounding world-space (*Weltraum*).

If, in this way, even the normal process of respiration must be looked upon as something dangerous, it will be only natural that the danger should amount to the last degree when the act of exhaling happens to coincide with the utterance of articulate sounds, sounds that may be charged with some deep meaning. For with the utterance of meaningful sounds, the breath-soul is consciously and intentionally protracted towards its object. When a man utters a word loaded with meaning, he has 'something' in his mind; to put it in the phraseology of animistic psychology, his soul at such a moment becomes charged with some magical power, and this is carried on by means of the voice from the utterer of the word to its receiver. For the primitive mind, a speech sound pronounced with volition and intention immediately changes itself into a quasi-material manifestation of the soul-power. And it is doubtless in this sense that the word 'breath' "nᵉshāmāh" occurring in the well-known last line of the *Book of Psalms* should be understood: 'Let every

breath praise Yah!'

It will be noted that both in the Sumerian and Hebrew myths of Creation, the creative power of the word is made to work by the life-giving power of the divine breath. As a Psalmist sings,

> By the word ("dābhār") of Yahweh were the heavens made,
> And by the breath ("rūaḥ") of His mouth all their host,

word and breath constantly stand in parallelism as the means of God's creative work. In other words, there is hardly any distinction made between word and breath, the two being closely associated with each other in the consciousness of the singer. This is paralleled by a remarkable passage of the *Koran* (*The Chapter of Women*, v. 169), where, in reference to Jesus Christ, it is proclaimed that:

> The Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, is but the apostle of Allah
> and His Word ("kalimah") which He cast into Mary, and a Spirit
> "rūḥ" (=breath) emanating from Him.

Another striking example is afforded by the *Corpus Hermeticus* (I. *Poimandres*). It is well known that both in Hellenistic and in Palestinian Judaism the conception of the divine breath and the divine Word used to be so intimately intertwined that the two could not easily be separated. It is very significant that the LXX phrase, '*a breath of God* "pneuma theou" was hovering over the water' is replaced in *Poimandres* by '*the breath-natured word* "pneumatikos logos"', showing with utmost clarity that the breath and word are here completely identified. (cf. C. H. Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, Chap. VI, 1, C.)

Speaking more generally we may say that, according to animistic psychology, the breath becomes visibly strong and powerful whenever the natural power of the soul is intensified or heightened to an unusual degree; and that any words uttered at such moments naturally become power-words. This, however, is but another way of saying that the word can behave magically only when it works in conjunction with strong breath, that is to say, only when intentionally pronounced, and this even in the case of the divine person creating the world by means of language. Even the most sinister word of malediction, so long as it is not actually uttered, discloses no objectively recognizable power; it only begins to work the moment it is pronounced. Words in general are, in primitive way of thinking, terrible entities, but they remain harmless so long as they are kept in the mind, so long as they are not carried out by the emission of the voice. We now see why so much importance is usually attached to the working of breath in the magical processes of primitive peoples in all parts of the world.

This account of the matter, however, will need some further qualification, for

it might easily invite misunderstanding as to the real nature of the magical power of the word and mislead one into thinking that verbal magic is essentially independent of 'meaning.' In fact not a few scholars, arguing from the fact that magical formulas among ancient and primitive peoples are very often characteristically composed of incomprehensible syllables, have drawn the conclusion that in the magical use of language the meanings of words play quite an insignificant role or even that they play no place at all. This, however, is evidently a hasty assertion. The importance of the breath as an indispensable factor of all genuine verbal magic should not be emphasized too one-sidedly to the detriment of the meaning factor which is no less important. Indeed, in dealing with the problem of the language of magic and sorcery we must not lose sight of the fact that if the word becomes an active force only when spoken, that is, only when brought to actuality by the outgoing breath loaded with something of the soul-power of the man who speaks, the breath, on its part, can rarely take real effect if it does not carry out articulate sounds. Simple breathing works practically no magic; in order to exert a magical influence it must be charged with voice, and the voice must ordinarily be articulate sounds, whether these be real words or some incomprehensible syllables.

It is to be observed in this connection that the so-called 'meaningless syllables' which we encounter so often in primitive incantation rituals are not, in the belief of the primitive, mere meaningless sonorous combinations; they differ also sharply from the singing of birds or animal cries in this point, namely that, whereas these latter are unanalysable or inarticulate wholes, they are really 'names', mysterious names which, though unintelligible to human ear, must be quite comprehensible to the higher spirits and gods or even to the material things, and are accordingly capable of having influence upon them. So we should guard ourselves against taking the apparently nonsensical terms so often met with in magical language as absolutely meaningless; for, far from being devoid of any meaning, the word that does not speak to human beings is here believed to possess so much the deeper meaning, comprehensible only to the beings superior to man. It is moreover extremely rare that a magic spell or ritual consists in its entirety in sheer nonsense. By far the greatest number of magical formulas and ceremonial songs of savage tribes not only stand on the basal assumption that thay are understandable to supernatural agents, but *are* also understandable in some way or other even to human beings; for they are at the very most none other than strings of incomprehensible syllables interspersed with real words. The problem of the use of nonsensical words in verbal magic will be discussed in further detail in a later context. Suffice it for the moment to point out that nothing is *meaningless* in the magician's use of language, for the soul-power of the magician—or, to put it in a more modern way, his will-power—which, as I have said above, constitutes the very beginning of all magical act—is in this case practically synonymous with the power to 'mean' objects. It is my belief that the genuine magic of linguistic

signs begins only with the emergence of Meaning, with the emergence of symbols (as opposed to signs) which are capable of connoting as well as denoting.

Chapter IV

VERBAL MAGIC IN THE MIDST OF MODERN CIVILIZATION

My purpose in this chapter is to consider the role played by the magical function of speech in the present-day civilized societies. It must be stated at the outset that there can be no pretence of my discussion being exhaustive, for it would in reality require an entire volume to do full justice to this chapter. As we shall presently see, a detailed consideration of the status of magical language in modern life would of necessity call for an examination of the spiritual basis of our modern civilization in its entirety. That, of course, belongs to another place than the present treatise. The best possible thing I can do here is to sketch only a few of the most remarkable features of the phenomenon of verbal magic in modern guise. Religion, as one could naturally expect, is the domain where the magical use of language still enjoys a privileged position as being all but exclusive means of man's interccurse with the unseen world. So I shall intentionally glean my topics from those areas of human activity that lie to-day definitely outside the sway of religious ideas, for it would be more germane to my central theme if I could show the survival of elements of the primitive in the least expected places of our life.

It would seem, on a superficial view, that the civilized races of mankind to-day have completely outgrown the kind of primitive trait of mind that has been described in the preceding sections. Most of our cultured contemporaries confidently believe their definite mental superiority to tribesmen. This belief appears to have been greatly reinforced and fostered by the work of some of the authorities who have maintained that there is a basic difference in kind between the primitive's way of thinking and that of modern man, and that the logic of the primitive is an entirely different thing from the reasoning processes of the civilized. The joint witness of the leading anthropologists and ethnographers of to-day, however, seems to testify precisely to the contrary of this assumption, which is, on their view, quite gratuitous. They have become more and more doubtful about the allegedly 'essential' difference between the two types of mind, or about the existence of some such thing as 'primitive' mentality as definitely distinguished from their own. They are, on the contrary, unanimous in emphasizing that human nature is one the world around; they tend to recognize in the lowest forms the potentiality of the highest and to regard the highest to be nothing but the necessary evolution of the lowest. They assert, moreover, that this fundamental unity of human nature is to be sought not in the direcion of Reason, as Descartes would have us believe, but quite in the opposite direction.

At the beginning of his *Method* Descartes wrote: Of all things, good sense (i.e. Reason) is the most equitably distributed among men. Scholars interested in the study of human nature tell us that this is unfortunately not the case. Far from being a natural endowment, reason or reasoning is, as C. R. Aldrich has pointed out, a highly artificial accomplishment even among the people in civilized countries (*Primitive and Modern Civilization* Chap. IX.). It is not Reason, but love of magic that must be recoginzed, if anything, as 'most equitably distributed among men', since this tendency is in fact so universally observed among mankind, whether civilized or savage, far and wide over the world and through the ages. Magic has hitherto been widely believed to be based on a fundamentally mistaken notion of causality; it is, one has often argued, ignorance of true cause-effect relations that holds primitive people to magical practices. As we saw in the foregoing chapter, this admirably accounts for such superstitious or erroneous ideas about the miraculous power of the word as are commonly entertained by primitive people. But we must not assume that these constitute the whole of verbal magic; it has another, deeper layer of structure to be taken into account if we are to gain closer understanding of the mechanism of speech.

To-day many scholars are inclined to think that the root of magic lies much deeper than it has generally been imagined. Magic, as Susanne Langer remarks, seems to be rather a spontaneous, purely natural activity springing directly from a primary human need. 'Exactly as bees swarmed and birds built nests,' our ancestors employed magic quite of themselves. (*Philosophy in a New Key* Chap. II). But if the tendency to magical rites is so deep-rooted in human nature and comes in fact from a sheer inward need, we should naturally expect to find it at work in a variety of ways even among ourselves. It is true that the persistence of this primitive psyche is to a considerable degree obscured in the cultured modern, but that is chiefly because he has learned to build up his world-outlook on scientific grounds turning away from the actualities of his supposedly civilized life, where primitive processes are still largely used and even needed.

It is not necessary to go into the details of the enormous mass of superstitious beliefs and customs actually observed among civilized people. Anthropologists are always there to assure us how foolish and primitive we at bottom still are. Contemporary literature on ethnography abounds in striking examples of the survival, among the highly cultivated manners and thoughts of the polite world, of the primitive and superstitious ideas which originated in dim antiquity. Besides, a little attention is sufficient to reveal the so-called civilized and cultured people with their belief in mascots, amulets, charms, lucky stones, lucky numbers and so forth, conducting their ordinary activities in much the same way as the fetish-worshippers living in the uncivilized corners of the world. Frazer has compared the surface of our modern society to 'a thin crust which may at any moment be rent by the subterranean forces slumbering below', and has indicated the existence of a solid layer of

savegery beneath our feet as a standing menace to civilization. It is, then, no cause for surprise that our language faithfully reflects this state of affairs.

In language behaviour, as in various other spheres of human activity, the domain of the magical, at first of tremendous extent, has, as already hinted, become limited to a considerable degree, in proportion to the progress and propagation of scientific culture, but even to-day the people are far from having renounced all their fantastic ideas with regard to the nature of language. Quite a number of superstitious customs which took their origin in the remotest past still persist among the general public in civilized countries with scarcely abated vigour. These usages of an openly magical character, however, are in the nature of the case exactly the same as those described in the preceding chapter. In point of fact I have often referred to them there; besides, they are too obvious and too wide-spread to require support from fresh examples. So we may as well turn immediately to other phases of magical lnaguage that are more or less concealed from view, and are therefore more difficult of analysis.

I have already alluded to the ceremonial language, which is, as it were, the only authentic magical use of words still admitted in modern societies. As such, it occupies but a comparatively trivial position in contemporary social life, Its tremendous importance, however, leaps at once to the eye as soon as we direct our attention beneath the surface of society in order to plumb the depths of modern civilization. There we find the magical conception of language still vigorously living on, and exerting from there a tremendous sway over the whole domain of our practical affairs. The primeval spirit of magic still keeps reappearing persistently in new and unexpected places of our life in a variety of forms. Indeed, a brief glance at our own social institutions, beliefs, and customs will be sufficient to make us realize at once that the mingling of the magical with the ethical and the legal is far from being obsolete in the most civilized communities. Everyone knows, for example, that both the evolution of jurisprudence and the development of ethics everywhere owe a great deal to the previous existence of tribal or ceremonial law. In fact, at the level of ceremonial law there is practically no distinction between the legal and the ethical, as there is no separation there of the civil and criminal from the canon law. In Islam, the Koran is the sole source of all jurisprudence and ethics. The ancient books of law which have come down to us, such as the Codex Hammurapi, the Laws of Manu, or the Priestly Code of the Old Testament, are all collections of a great many minutest commands and prohibitions regulating the proper conduct of man in all the possible contingencies of individual and communal life. These rules are deemed by all to be divine in origin, but most of them, especially prohibitions, are, in reality, but tribal taboos attired in new garments.

From our own specific point of view however, the core of the whole problem does not lie in these historical generalities, but precisely in this point, that many of the ancient customs with undeniable imprints of their magic origins have

preserved themselves almost intact into the midst of high modern culture, or at least have left ineffaceable traces in our legal and moral life. The normative and authoritative nature of the language of law and the language of ethics cannot satisfactorily be explained if we leave out of account the magical contexts out of which they arose, and with which they remain most closely connected.

It is to be remarked that both the creation of law and its execution require magical processes. The oath, for instance, which is still as vigorous as ever in our law courts and constitutes an indispensable element of a modern trial, is an admittedly magical act. The close relationship existing between oath and ordeal was rightly stressed long ago by Albert Herman Post. In his *Grundriss der ethnologischen Jurisprudenz*, published in 1895, he expressly states (II, § 134) that our custom of taking an oath in open court is a survival of the primitive ordeal, and that, therefore, it should, properly speaking, always be couched in the linguistic form of self-cursing. Through the magical power supposed to be inherent in his formula, the witness solemnly testifies to the absolute truth of what he is going to say, and, in case of a perjury, exposes himself to the wrath of the supreme heavenly judge whom he invokes. But there is another, more important respect in which the whole judicial procedure, from accusation to final verdict, may and must be understood as a kind of ceremonial or ritual performance. In an illuminating article entitled *Ethics and the Ceremonial Use of Language*(in *Philosophical Analysis* ed. Max Black), Margaret Macdonald has advanced strong arguments for thinking that judicial procedure is in fact a public, spoken ceremonial. Her theory, in brief, runs as follows: a trial is not a mere series of factual investigation, interpretation, condemnation or acquital, but accusation, prosecution, defence, verdict, sentence in open court, that is, the former enacted in strictly formal manner so as to constitute a public ceremonial performance completely set apart from common life. It is significant that this ceremony proceeds as a verbal contest between the accused and his accusers, words being used as their weapons (this, be it remarked by anticipation, is a genuine survival from primitive ages, when magicians or prophets used to battle against each other by means of magical words, which were, in their eyes, weapons even more effective than bows and spears); and it is again words that determine victory or defeat in the final verdict. The verdict and sentence, she adds, are not mere factual conclusions from evidence; they are accepted as effective and binding because uttered in a special setting which gives them authority, 'akin to that of a magical formula and derived from similar source, a ceremonial performance.'

It is evident from the numerous historical and ethnographical monographs that have been written on the evolution of ethical ideas among mankind, that similar considerations apply also to the origin and nature of the language of morals. No one doubts that the innumerable prescriptions of conduct, positive as well as negative, of which ancient and primitive laws are composed, are much less ethical than ceremonial. Moral conduct as understood by the modern mind, i. e. the

merely ethical, does not really exist in primitive conditions; the morals of the primitive are the right performance of the traditional rites and the respect for the taboo. As in the case of the language of law, the ethical language owes its authority in part at least to its having sprung from a magical or ceremonial source; that is, the authoritative character of moral judgements is inexplicable without taking into consideration their former status as primitive imperatives sending their roots far down into the magico-religious consciousness of early man.

Moral judgements are usually couched in informative language 'You ought to tell the truth, 'You ought not to steal' etc.; in outward form they are indicative sentences which do adequately inform and describe something, and, as such, seem to be as capable of truth and falsehood as ordinary factual statements. Hence the strong temptation for philosophers to reduce all moral judgements (and imperatives) to indicatives, for, after all, these are the only forms of utterance that are really meaningful, and all the others are deemed more or less meaningful to the precise extent that they are reducible to indicative sentences. This kind of approach, however, is bound to fail of its purpose if only for the reason that it can never account for the authoritative character of moral judgements without smuggling in a gratuitous metaphysics of Values as supra-sensuous entities.

To remedy this defect, another group of views have recently been put forth. This new type of theory, which is usually referred to as the 'emotive' theory of ethics, and whose leading exponent is C. L. Stevenson, holds, in brief, that there are close affinities between moral judgements and commands, that, indeed, a moral judgement, like a value judgement, is nothing else than a 'command in a misleading grammatical from' (Carnap), for words are so used here as to arouse feeling and emotion in the hearer, and so to influence his attitude or to stimulate action. The emotive theory thus understood has the merit of emphasizing that moral judgements, unlike factual statements, have some peculiar power to produce active effects, but it is certainly wrong in assimilating those effects with those of ordinary rhetorical devices of language, and in fact a host of objections have been brought against it both generally and in detail. In particular, Margaret Macdonald in the above mentioned article has raised the weighty objection that in this sort of view the normative core of moral judgements must remain unaccounted for or even distorted. It is a mistake, she says, to equate the language of morals with that of lyrical poems. Commands issued, and attitudes expressed, by moral judgements, cannot be simply viewed as matters of private concern. They do arouse emotional attitdues and stimulate actions, but, unlike personal expressions of a poetical or rhetorical nature, they are public and impersonal in character and have authority. She suggests that these public, impersonal, and authoritative features which characterize moral judgements can only be adequately accounted for when we compare the language of ethics with ritual and ceremonial speech. Moral judgements, on this view, are ceremonial utterances, though with no specific ceremonies, or rather, with the whole

of man's life as a big moral rite. To use moral words or to pronounce moral judgements means to consecrate their objects, give them ritual significance, as it were, and to treat them ceremoniously. Moral words are 'the language of a rite in which we are all lifelong performers'.

The present seems a suitable opportunity for dealing briefly with the language of poetry. Reference has incidentally been made in the preceding paragraph to the emotive nature of the language of lyrical poems to mark off by contrast the 'ceremonial' or 'ritual' character of ethical language. But that does not in any way mean that the poetical use of language is free from magical associations. Quite on the contrary, poetry *is* in origin and spirit the very quintessence of verbal magic. As the original meaning of the Latin word "carmen" shows, from the earliest times poetry has always been incantation. Indeed nothing was so wide-spread among the peoples of antiquity than the belief in the occult powers of measured lines ("Carmina vel caelo possunt deducere lunam" Virgil) Oracles and prophesies were delivered in verse; prayers, curses and blessings, and magical formulas were usually cast in rhythmic form. Almost always religion spoke in rhythm or metre. Even at the highly developed stage of Hebrew prophetism, the inspired mouthpieces of Yahweh were all poets; in the ancient world no prophet could hope to command a hearing unless he was a poet. The reason or reasons why the language of religion and magic has universally such close affinities with the poetic use of words will receive detailed consideration in Chapter XI. For the moment we may be content to give passing attention to the very remarkable fact that some of our greatest poets remain to this day, not only in their use of words but in their very poetic consciousness genuine verbal magicians.

It is true that poetry has lost most of its original magical flavour in the eyes of the modern reading public (and, to some extent, of poets themselves.) To the vast majority of people to-day poetic words are simply 'emotive' or 'emotional' terms; the poet uses his words in an 'emotive way'. The question as to from whence this 'emotion' is derived is usually left untouched. Most people will probably admit with Herbert Read that poetry is 'sudden transformation which words assume under a particular influence' (*Poetic Diction* in *Coll. Ess.*), but what precisely this particular influence consists in is a question for which no unanimity can be hoped for. For in our time, every individual poet or every individual critic is at liberty to establish his own standard of poetry.

It is perfectly possible, as in the case of the 'Wit-writing' of Dryden and his school for instance, to frame a definition of the process of poetry in such a way as to make it an entirely different thing from what it originally was. Yet the fact remains that for at least some of the modern poets the poetic experience is in itself a magical experience. Readers of the works and sayings of poets like Paul Claudel, Paul Valéry, or R. M. Rilke cannot, I believe, fail to be struck by the

extraordinary hold which the primeval spirit of magic still has on their minds.

Da stieg ein Baum. O reine Uebersteigung!
O Orpheus singt! O hoher Baum im Ohr!

With these words Rilke has described and extolled the function of the poet as a verbal magician. The whole of the first piece of his *Sonnets to Orpheus* is dedicated to a description of the miracle-working power of poetry and song. Orpheus sings playing on his harp, and it moves all the beasts of the wood, the trees, the springs, and the stones to ecstatic enthusiasm; nothing can resist the enchantment of his music. In the popular tradition of the Greeks, Orpheus was a magical singer and musician from Thrace. It is extremely significant for our present purpose that the legend made him also a priest of Dionysos, or rather the real founder of the Bacchic rites, for this clearly suggests that in the beautiful Greek legend poetry was almost completely identified with magical formula. So it is too in R. M. Rilke's poetic consciousness. Poetry is—so he repeatedly insisted—*Beschwörung*; the essential task of the poet is to be a *Beschwörender*. "Dass es ein Göttliches binde, / hebt sich das Wort zur Beschwörung." For him, then, to utter poetry is a genuine magical act by which the binding and conjuring power of words is released.

This peculiar state of poetic consciousness, which we may aptly describe as Orphic, is actually very often met with in a number of eminent modern poets. It will perhaps worth our while to consider here the case of a modern poet who concentrated all his lifelong efforts on the end of creating a language of his own, entirely based on the principle of magical evocation: Stéphane Mallarmé. In the very heart of modern European civilization, this greatest poet-magician of the last century was dreaming of the ultimate possibility of an Absolute Language. Painfully conscious, on the one hand, of all sorts of imperfections which beset the ordinary language fitted only for determining the actions of every day life, and firmly believing, on the other, in the existence of the eternal Verb, i.e. the heavenly ideal of Absolute Language (*le Verbe*), he sought to remould the former so as to transform it into something like a medium through which the latter might manifest itself in all its original magnificent splendour. The ideal state, that is to say, of poetic language is, according to Mallarmé, a perfect actulization (in the scholastic sense of the word) of all the magical possibilities containd in the language of ordinary use: so perfect indeed that, when the Absolute Poet utters, for instance, the word "flower!" (*fleur*), 'there musically emerges out of the depth of oblivion [i. e. the evanescent vibration of the air caused by the utterance of the word] into which my voice sends down some contour [i. e. the physical sounds that draw in the air, as it were, the outline of a flower], something entirely different from ordinary flowers, the very Idea, sweet, never to be met with in any nosegay.' ("Je dis: une fleur! et, hors de l'oubli où ma voix relègue aucun contour, en tant que quelque chose d'autre que les calices sus, musicalement se lève, idée même et suave, l'absente de tous bouquets."

—Introduction to René Ghill's *Traité du Verbe.*)

Commenting on this phase of Mallarmé's poetry, his disciple, Paul Valéry, declares that its absolute beauty reposes entirely on the magical power ("la vertu enchanteresse") of language. In an essay devoted to this extraordinary poet, *Jl disais quelquefois à Stéphane Mallarmé* (*Variété* III), he describes in touching words his own experience of the first encounter with some fragments of "Hérodiade", "les Fleurs" and "le Cygne." It was an astonishing experience; the strange beauty of these poems suddenly ravished his soul; he was completely 'enchanted', literally 'beside himself.' Then he gives us the most penetrating analysis of this magical effect produced by Mallarmé's poetry. 'It happened', he writes, 'that this poet, the least *primitive* of poets, could, through the combination of words, which is unusual, strangely chanting, and, as it were, almost stupefying, through the musical splendour of verses and their unique plenitude, produce the impression of the most powerful quality of primitive poetry; that of the *magical formula.*'

'For a long time man believed that certain combinations of words could be charged with something more powerful than their apparent meaning; that these were better understood by things than by men, better understood by stones, water, beasts, gods, by hiddn treasures, by the powers and springs of life, than by the reasonable soul; that they were clearer to Spirits than to the human spirit. Even death could not sometimes resist rhythmical conjurations, and tombs were often forced to release ghosts. Nothing is older, and nothing is more *natural* than this belief in the efficacy of the word; man believed that this power worked less by its exchange value than by some mysterious reverberations which it evoked in the substance of beings.'

Then he proceeds rightly to compare the language of primitive poetry with words we utter in the most solemn or the most critical moments of life, with the language of liturgy, with what is murmured or groaned at the height of passion, with words used to calm a child or soothe the afflicted, with words which attest the truth of an oath. What is common to all these forms of language is, he says, that the words are uttered in a special tone of voice. Meaning, the intelligible content, is not the essential element; it is accent, the inflection of voice which directly addresses our life rather than our mind that possesses the magical efficacy.

This last remark incidentally brings to our notice another fact of far-reaching importance that even the most ordinary words of everyday language may, when uttered in a special tone or used in an emotional setting, easily become invested with incalculable force. As is generally recognized, sounds and syllables tend to be strengthend or lengthened conspicuously when the speaker is under the influence of some strong feeling or when he aims at exciting emotions and attitudes in the hearer; his voice takes a richer tone, fluctuates, and in many cases approaches what Jespersen has called the sing-song manner of speaking. There can be little doubt that the tone in cases such as these produces the 'frame' effect; it isolates the most

banal and colourless words from the irrelevancies of everyday existence and heightens and transforms them into something extremely powerful and efficacious. This is, so to speak, a modern version of the ancient, primitive rite of ceremonial purification (cf. Chap. X). By the way, we may do well to remember that in moments of emotional outburst civilized persons tend naturally and unconsciously to relapse into primitive stages of mind.

In anticipation of what we shall come to more fully later, this occasion may be taken to remark that, from the magico-religious point of view of the primitive, objects and persons constantly pass from the common domain of the profane into the realm of the sacred, then back again from the latter state to the former, by means of the rites of purification. (cf. E. Durkhiem, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Eng, tr, Ch. I, 3) Once in the atmosphere of the 'untouchable', everything, man and object alike, becomes charged with profoundly perilous power which makes it something entirely different in kind from what it has been in the world of normal life. As one would expect, language is no exception to this rule; in the realm of the sacred all expression is sacred, every sound is full of power. In civilized surroundings, it is affectivity which plays the role of this 'sacred' realm; it invests every bit of speech that comes in with some mysterious power which may, and in many cases does, prove extremely perilous, But is this not tantamount to saying that our living speech is of a profoundly magical nature, for, as often pointed out, our linguistic behaviour, except in numerically insignificant cases of scientific, technological, or logical discourse, is largely under the sway of a myriad of emotions and passions. The language of everyday speech is literally pervaded by, and charged with the atmosphere of affectivity. Feelings, sentiments, and emotions are, as Vendryes has remarked (*Language*, Chap. IV), like a light vapour which floats above the expression of thought, and actually no linguistic expression of an idea is completely exempt from a nuance of sentiment.

Much attentions has recently been given to the magical effect of emotive language. General semanticists have much clamoured against the ravages caused by the 'verbal magic' of emotive terms, which tend to become particularly harmful on the lips of a powerful propagandist. 'Emotive' terms are those words that are particularly fitted for the expression and provocation of strong feelings; those words that are apt to influence powerfully people's attitudes. It should be noted, however, that, strictly speaking, there is no separate class of words which *are* emotive. All words have, actually or potentially, feeling-tones; all words have—of course in greatly varying degrees—emotional associations for the community as well as for each individual. This means that there is practically no word which cannot be so used as to behave emotively. Some of our words are glaringly emotive, whilst in others the emotional association is, so to speak, slumbering, and does not usually enter consciousness. But invisible though it is on the surface, it is always there behind the screen and is ready to break forth at any moment. A stress laid in pronounciation

upon some word or syllable is often enough to raise hidden powers to the surface, that are capable of arousing all sorts of feelings and emotions. It would be instructive to notice in this connection that even such colourless, abstract 'logical' terms as "and", "or", and "not" etc., can, by pronouncing them in a special tone, be made to work no less emotively than those highly 'emotive' terms as "demagogue", "jingo", "scoundrel" and the like.

Hermann Ammann, in his book *Die menschliche Rede* (Bd. II, kap. III), spoke of the 'magic of everyday' (Magie des Alltags); he suggested, though himself did not undertake to develop the point in that place very far, that the affective elements of language—which in fact occupy by far the greatest part of our ordinary conversation—might be reinstated in their original status of verbal magic. Indeed, deep traces of this primitive mode of behaviour surprise us where they are most unlikely to be met with. The act of assertion, for example, which undoubtedly constitutes the very heart and core of every factual statement, is, viewed from this standpoint, neither more nor less than a survival of the primitive act of making an oath. This fact does not usually come prominently into view, but the magical force which is lurking behind the logical form is at once brought vividly before the mind's eye when the assertion is challenged, and when, in replying to the challenge the speaker gives his assertion a 'rhetorical' turn. Someone, let us suppose, who is at this moment empirically certain that it is raining, says, "It is raining." Some other person who happens to be present expresses a doubt about it or even flatly negates the proposition and replies, "It is not raining". Thereupon our first speaker gets excited and affirms emphatically that it *is* raining. It will be observed that to emphasize an assertion 'rhetorically' means to enforce it, as it were, by letting loose the emotive—i.e. magical—power contained in the word. Karl Vossler has aptly called the man who is being emphatic a 'speaking magician', and has insisted that rhetorical emphasis is an 'echo of linguistic magic and incantations.' (*The Spirit of Language in Civilization*, Chap. vii)

Perhaps it would not be out of place here to mention briefly the problem of the Chinese copula, whose origin is clearly emotive or emphatic. In the eldest period to which our historical documents take us, the Chinese language lacked anything corresponding to the verb "to be" which is so common in modern Western languages; the commonest syntactic pattern of predication which would correspond to "A is B" was simply "A B". There was, instead, an astonishing number of emotive-emphatic particles which, used singly or in various combinations, served as signs of strong asserton: "A verily! B", "A indeed! B", "A B indeed!" "A B verily indeed!", or even "A B really verily indeed!" The smallest and most 'harmless-looking particle' "yeh" 也, to whose very troublesome doings as a copula-equivalent in Chinese grammar Arthur Waley has referred in his *The Way and its Power*, is nothing more than one of those numerous particles of emotive emphasis. It is indeed an open question whether we may regard these emphatic paricles as so many

equivalents of the Western copula; Wang Li (王力) has definitely denied it (cf. *Chung kuo wĕn fa chung tə̊ chi tz'ŭ* "The Copula in Chinese Grammar"「中国文法中的繋詞」清華学報 XII, I). At any rate they may, I think, safely be looked upon as something halfway marking a transition stage on the way from the purely emotive particle to the logico-grammatical copula. They illustrate the borderline or the transitional stage between 'rhetorical' emphasis on the one hand, and logical assertion on the other. In other words, they serve to bring out the fact that the prelogical status of assertion has something markedly emotional about it.

Reasons of space make it impossible to deal at all adequately with the very interesting but highly intricate question as to the logico-grammatical function of those emphatic particles, nor is it possible to survey here the further development which they underwent in the course of subsequent ages. It remains simply to note that the much-discussed word "shih" 是, too, which is admittedly the sole authentic copula-equivalent in present-day Chinese, owes its origin to the common need of giving 'rhetorical' emphasis to one's assertion. This term "shih" which, roughly speaking from the fifth century A. D. onward, came to be much used as a connecting link between the subject and the predicate, i. e. as a real copula, was originally an emphatic demonstrative word (a *Zeigwort* in K. Bühler's terminology), meaning something like 'this!' pronounced in a solemn, assertive tone, It must be remembered that this word, unlike its synonyms "tz'ŭ" 此 and "ch'i" 其, etc., which are nothing more nor less than pure demonstratives, has a very remarkable connotation of 'right' or 'righteousness'—*Shuo Wen* Dictionary directly defines it by "chih" (right, straight)—suggesting that originally it must have had much to do with the act of asseveration, or at least with the positive act of asserting the absolute truth of one's words.

We may do well to observe in this connection that a somewhat similar case testifying to the close relationship existing between oath, assertion, and predication, occurs also in Sumerian, where the root "me" which furnishes the language with the principal forms of the verb 'to be', very frequently appears in the form [-am], and, suffixed to participles, nouns, and various other phrases, gives to the latter a remarkably strong assertive force.

"Gim nin-a-ni mu-da-di-am	lit. (The-slave-girl with-her-mistress
eri-ne lugal-ni zag-mu-da-gin-am	walked indeed!
uru-ma u sig-ni zag-ba mu-da-nad-am"	Slave with-their-master went-by-the-side-indeed!
(Gudea Statue)	In-my-city the-powerful-man caused-to-lie-down-indeed! his-vassal by his side.)

When this particle is still more heightened a degree by the addition of "nan-"

and takes the form of "nan-am", the sentence to which it happens to be appended assumes almost the force of an oath: "Shul-gi e-kur-na u-a-bi na-nam" (Shulgi of E-kur the nourisher most surely is).

Now to hark back to the discussion of the emphatic affirmation "It *is* raining", which has been interrupted. We must notice that the sign of affirmation, "is", is here uttered in a special tone of voice, and that this sudden change of tone makes the whole sentence something entirely different in nature from the ordinary "It is raining", and shifts it, as it were, to another level of discource. In Bertrand Russell's phrase, the emphatic type of sentence belongs to the 'secondary language', while the ordinary affirmative sentence belongs to the 'primary language'. On his view, however, the ordinary negative sentence also belongs to the secondary language, and "It *is* raining" (emphaic) and "It is not raining" are placed on the same level because both presuppose the existence of the sentence "It is raining", which belongs to the primary language. This is clear, we are told, from the fact that "It *is* raining" is logically equivalent to "I affirm: it is raining" (or, to be still more logical, to: "the sentence 'it is raining' is true"), and "It is not raining" is logically equivalent to "I deny: it is raining" (or, "the sentence 'it is raining' is false, i. e. not true".) Thus, speaking generally, if "p" is a sentence of the primary language, both "$\bar{p}$" and "p !" (i. e. the same form of words used as the antithesis of denial) belong to the secondary language. (B. Russell, *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, Chap. IV) But from the view-point of the implicit 'magic of everyday', the role of emphatic "*is*" differs in an important way from that of the negative particle, for the former is openly 'rhetorical', i. e. magical, while the latter is neutral, and so must itself be uttered in an emotional tone if it is to behave in a magical way.

"Serpent!" screamed the Pigeon
"I'm *not* a serpent!" said Alice indignantly.
"Serpent, I say again!" repeated the Pigeon.
(*Alice in Wonderland*, V)

Be that as it may, what is important for our present purpose is to realize that whatever energy the so-called rhetorical emphasis has is, genetically speaking, most intimately associated with the act of releasing the binding power of words in the form of 'asseveration'. This carries us back to those for-off days when to assert something emphatically (including both affirmation and negation) literally meant to 'asseverate', that is, to declare in an unusually solemn and strained frame of mind as if standing actually before some invisible or supernormal judge. If, for instance, a man declared that he was *really* innocent, what he meant thereby may very well be represented by some such formula as this: "I swear by X: I am innocent!", though, needless to say, the sentence as it stands may appear grossly exaggerated. This original force of assertion becomes particularly apparent when we examine the ordinary

form of statement in such a language as classical Arabic, whose general structure is conspicuously emotional rather than rational. Readers of the ancient Arabic literature know that among the desert Arabs even the most commonplace type of statement tended to assume the form of an emphatic oath: e. g.

"Wa 'llāhi inna A la B" (*Ey God, verily* A [is] *indeed* B!)

It will be easily seen that it is not a far cry from this kind of oath to our rhetorical emphasis. Thus, viewed in the light of such genetic fact, our "It *is* raining" could reasonably be traced back to its original form, "(I swear) by X: it is raining." This asseverative part which is put before the material or content of the judgement may sometimes actually appear on the surface, as when we say "I tell you, I assure you, I bet, etc. : it is raining," but more usually remains implicit. Whether explicit or implicit, it is precisely this part which galvanize, so to speak, the main proposition and transforms it into a real living sentence.

But if such is the case, then the apparently radical difference between the sentence of primary language ("It is raining") and that of secondary language ("It *is* raining") turns out to be a simple matter of degree. For every declarative sentence, however neutral and commonplace, involves, if uttered by a real speaker in a real situation, some modicum of assertive element; otherwise it would be no living sentence at all. In dealing with the problem of the logical structure of sentence, Charles Bally (*Linguistique Générale et Linguistique Française*, § 28–35. I) has rightly remarked that every sentence consists logically of two complementary parts, which are both indispensable: the one, the assertive part, and the other, the part representing the content of judgement. The former he calls 'modus', the latter 'dictum.' He insists that the assertive part, in the majority of cases, remains hidden in the dictum. Thus, when Galileo says, "The earth turns," the indicative mood of "turns" imply, "I know, I believe, I affirm (that the earth turns)." This approach, however, seems to commit in some cases a sort of confusion between the real subject of assertion and the grammatical subject of the sentence. So in a sentence of the type "Galileo affirms that the earth turns," the verb "affirms" is construed as the modus which joins the dictum—here, the notion of the rotation of the earth—with the subject of assertion (Galileo). The theory fails to see that the assertive force of the sentence always comes from the 'belief' of the person who utters that sentence. Thus in the sentence, "Galileo affirms that the earth turns", the verb "affirms" has no assertive force, it does not vivify the proposition, it is part of the dictum; the this assertion comes, on the contrary, from the living subject who affirms sentence itself. Here too, the modus is implicit: (I affirm that) Galileo affirms that the earth turns.

At any rate, what is particularly relevant to the subject of our study is the fact just observed that even the most commonplace and simplest type of indicative sentence such as "It is raining" proves, on a closer examination, to be not in the least free

from magical associations. In its present status, or, to be more precise, so far as it is used in scientific discussions or logical exercises, the type of sentence may very well be said to have become something intellectual; one might safely state that now it can passably be used even for logical purposes. And yet, if we step outside the closed study of the theorist into the middle of the scenes of daily life and see it at work in actual living conversations, we shall be astonished to find how even this most neutral pattern of speech, which is generally supposed to be used for 'a mere statement of fact', still retains much of the magical force which it must have possessed in the remotest past. But if such be the case with the indicative sentence, with much more congency must the same apply to those other types of speech that are in their very nature more or less coloured with shades of emotion and feeling.

All these considerations seem to have led us ever more to the conclusion that all speech may, in a certain sense, be regarded as a magical act, though, of course, this magical nature is embodied in actual uses of speech in many degrees of intensity, varying from genuine verbal magic through many grades of half-conscious, half-unconscious magical use of language (e. g. commands, wishes or volitions, words and sentences used to express or to arouse emotional reactions, etc.) down to those types of sentence which present little or no outward sign of their magical core. In other words, we must assume the existence of a magical dimension, so to speak, to all linguistic behaviour ; it can be traced in diverse degrees and forms in every bit of speech on our lips, and almost in every one of the words we use in the reality of full life.

We may, I think, roughly compare the above mentioned magical dimension of speech to the Freudian realm of the 'unconscious', a sort of underground dungeon of our soul, into which all kinds of irrational beliefs, unconscious desires, and frustrated wishes are 'repressed', out of which, however, these uncouth monsters of our mind are ready at any time to break in upon the conscious world. In order to do justice to the overwhelming complexity of linguistic facts, we must not focus our attention too exclusively on the bright daylight sphere of our speech behaviour; we must study it too, as it moves and works along this dark dimension, and examine the structure of language in the light of the results obtained through this kind of approach. The importance of this way of viewing things will become evident when we come to deal with the problem of mental processes involved in linguistic meaning, which is beyond any doubt the most important and central subject of all current speculations about language. This we shall presently see.

Chapter V

THE FUNDAMENTAL MAGIC OF 'MEANING'

The result we have arrived at in the preceding chapter seems to suggest that before speaking of the magical *use* of language, we should rather speak of the magical *nature* of language. If, as has been shown, magic clings so tenaciously even to the most ordinary, commonplace use of linguistic symbols, if, in other words, it has penetrated and pervaded practically every phase of our linguistic behaviour, we might rightly feel prompted to the view that all human speech is essentially magical; that our words and sentences, before being utilized by professional magicians and sorcerers for their erroneous or evil purposes, are in themselves ultimately of a magical nature. Stated in this form, however, the view seems to require confirmation and justification. Can we really justify this position?

It will now be evident from what has been said that the problem of verbal magic is much more complicated than it appears at first sight. The very idea of magic itself, as far as concerns human speech, is not a simple, but a highly complex and many-sided one, and is, therefore, liable to be understood in a variety of ways. In fact, a moment's reflection will reveal that the term 'magic' has been applied by different writers on language to the most diverse linguistic facts. In order, therefore, to deal at all adequately with our specific problem it is necessary to distinguish clearly from the outset between various strata of verbal magic, and it will be advisable to lay it down upon ourselves as a rule to keep them apart and not to confound them with one another during the course of our discussion. Broadly speaking, there are at least three such strata to be distinguished: (1) the fundamental magic of meaning, that is, the notion of magic which is found embedded in the very semantic constitution of our words; (2) the practice of magic by means of linguistic signs, which constitutes verbal magic in the narrow, technical sense of the word, e. g. spells and incantations, blessings and curses, oaths, prayers, etc.; and as being between these two, (3) the 'spontaneous' magic of intense desire or emotion, which may modify even the most colourless words and particles in a very peculiar way and transform them in a moment into something charged with mysterious power. The last named stratum, which, from the perspective of modern users of language, may or may not be termed 'magic'—it may be remarked by the way that many semanticists have recently much emphasized the 'magical' nature of it—is most probably the one from which all forms of verbal magic (including those understood in the technical sense too) have ultimately orig-

inated, and thus affords us the key to the secret mechanism of our linguisiic behaviour in general. But of this and many other problems which it raises in its wayꝭ we shall speak in subsequent chapters. Here we are concerned only with the fundamental magic of meaning mentioned above as one of the three principal layers of magic in language.

It seems quite evident that to use the term 'magic' in this way is to use an extremely common word in an extremely uncommon sense; no one, in fact, will seriously pretend that every one of us, whenever he utters any word whatsoever, is thereby a real magician or sorcerer; it is, in other words, to apply the name 'magic' to the most ordinary, normal and workaday kind of human phenomenon in which the mind of ordinary modern man does not sense any magical association at all. This implies that only a thoroughgoing theoretical analysis can dig out of the phenomenon of Meaning its hidden magical core. But certain it is, at any rate, that there *is* a respect in which the meaning function of human speech may, and perhaps must, be regarded as most closely bound up with magical behaviour of man. We may recall at this point what H. Paul observed regarding a magical or animistic signification implicit in the use of the verb as such. In his *Prinzipien* (p. 89) he pointed out that the grammatical category of the verb embodies a certain kind of animation of Nature, closely akin to the primitve animation and personification of the universe which is characteristic of all mythical thinking. Nor has Paul been alone in recognizing the essential connection between magic and linguistic meaning in general. That, speaking more generally, there is something extraordinary about the meaning behaviour of the most ordinary words, that there always is something mysterious and extremely irrational clinging to the fundamental word-thing relation in such fashion that it forbids being conceived as the mere product of serene and sober intellect, has often been keenly felt and brought out in various connections by many writers on language and on human nature in general.

It is rightly maintained, for instance, by Walter Porzig (*Das Wunder der Sbrache* Kap. I), that the vital experience of Meaning springs out of the realm of magic and sorcery, which is an *Urerlebnis* of man. Like the poet R. M.Rilke whose magical view of language we referred to in the preceding chapter, Porzig sees the most original function of human speech in its power of *Beschwörung*. The human will, he argues, in order to penetrate into reality provides a sentence with its meaning; the will to take possession of a thing calls forth its name. What our children achieve or try to achieve with their rudimentary words is to exercise power over the things of the world through the well-formed gestures of words. 'To mean something by means of speech is no other than a weakened form of the intention of binding it magically.' (Mit der Rede etwas meinen ist nur eine Abschwächung dieser beschwörenden Absicht, p. 157.) Whenever and wherever man is moved by the desire to get possession of a specified piece of reality he gives it a name; the name once fixed, he can at will conjure up the thing designated and exercise over

it whatever control he pleases by simply uttering the name. As P. W. Bridgman put it, language separates out from the living matrix little bundles and freezes them (*The Nature of Physical Theory*). For the modern scientific mind this has no more signification than that man, by means of the naming process of language, can single out a limited number of relevant factors and things from the chaotic mass of his sensory experience, arrest and fix them in permanent forms, getting thus a relatively easy mental control over his surroundings. But to primitive type of consciousness it means infinitely more than that; for to name, or to know the name of, a thing is, as has been shown above, to grasp the very living soul of that object. He who holds sway over the words, says Pierre Angers— he is speaking of the contemporary poet Paul Claudel—, 'exercises thereby over the beings something of the creative sovereignty of God; he calls them, he makes them present to the mind, he evokes just the state of emotion which would correspond to their presence.' (*Commentaire à l'Art Poétique de Paul Claudel* p. 281)

Ainsi quand tu parles, ô poëte, dans une énumeration délectable
Proferant de chaque chose le nom,
Comme un père tu l'appelles mysterieusement dans son principe,
et selon que jadis
Tu participas a sa création, tu coopères à son exisence!

(P. Claudel, *Odes*)

It seems not fortuitous that the famous Genesis story counts language among the most precious gifts bestowed by God on mankind. In the second version of Creation we see Adam given the unique freedom of giving names to the living things in the world. 'So out of the ground God-Yahweh formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them. And whatsoever the man called any living being, that became its name. Thus the man gave names to all the animals, both to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field' (Gen. II, 19-20). The animals do not name themselves; man alone enjoys the privilege of naming them— and of course also of naming inanimate things. There is no doubt that this unique faculty of giving names to things is here regarded as the mark of man's superiority over the whole of the created world. For he who names a thing necessarily becomes the magical possessor of the thing.

This curious experience of Meainng is in no way confined to primitive people or to a very small number of those privileged persons who have somehow or other come to possess that kind of 'magistère de tous les mots' of which Claudel speaks. Genetic considerations strongly suggest that each of us must have once

experienced the amazing 'magic' of names in infancy and childhood. The analysis of the infantile formation of speech habits shows that there is a certain more or less well demarcated period in everyone's mental history during which the really remarkable discovery is made that things have names and that these names have a certain magical effect on the universe. Observers report that the child begins by playing with non-articulate verbal noises passionately and very persistently, but in an entirely aimless way; then gradually comes to notice that by uttering certain kinds of noises he can miraculously bring things into his hands. The child sees that everything he desires comes to him through the medium of words, that the utterance of them invariably produces certain reactions, that, in short, speech gives him command over the environment.

It is important to note that, as B.Malinowski emphasized in his excellent essay on *Meaning in Primitive Languages,* to the child at this stage—and to primitive Man alike—words are not so much means of expression as efficient means of action. Words are primarily used to bring things about. When the child wants an item of food he clamours for it, and it appears. 'The name of a person uttered aloud in a piteous voice possesses the power of materializing this person.' This and thousand other experiences of similar kind repeated everyday cannot fail to thrust deep into the child's mind the impression that words are really active forces, powerful enough to exercise, when released, a visible influence over various objects and actions. This experience of 'grasping' things by means of verbal noises is what W. Porzig calls 'das Erlebnis der Bedeutung', the vital experience of Meaning, as it could be called, and this it is that constitutes the very core and origin of the primitive, magical attitude towards words.

The language of children is generally recognized to be of a preeminently dynamic nature; it is in its entirety essentially active and *verbal* rather than static and *nominal.* And the suggestion may perhaps be made to appear plausible that such must have been the case with human language at the crudest and most primitive stage of its development Now verbs, as a basic category of language, are mostly names of actions and events, (or, to speak more strictly, they possess this peculiarity about them, that they present anything whatsoever *structurally* as an action or event.) So, as one might expect, the kind of magical effect of names just referred to is much more direct and straightforward in the case of the verb which names the desired event than in the case of the noun which does not directly specify the action to be performed. This will become apparent upon even a cursory examination of the imperative form of the verb, The imperative is a very remarkable linguistic device for designating the action or event desired in so straightforward and compulsory a way that the mere mention of the action or event in that form is generally sufficient to bring about its immediate realization. Besides, the second person of the imperative consists, in a great many languages of the world, of the bare word-stem or something that approximates it,

a fact which speaks strongly in favour of the chronological priority of this form to most other linguistic modes of expression. Another proof of the primitive or archaic nature of the imperative form is afforded by the fact that ontogenetically too, imperatives are among the most characteristic speech-forms which little children easily understand and even use in the earliest stages of language formation.

It is much more important, however, to remark that the speech of children is, in itself and as a whole, governed by the principle, or better, spirit of the imperative. It is not solely real imperatives that behave in the capacity of imperatives here; indeed there are strong reasons to believe that all words as employed by children, in whatever grammatical guise they appear, show an undeniable tendency to partake more or less manifestly of the nature of the imperative. The imperative character of child language has been admirably brought out and analyzed by G. Révész in his *Ursprung und Vorgeschichte der Sprache* (see in particular 8, III C). Experiments in the field of child psychology, he holds, shows that the little child is primarily interested in actions; earlier than any other forms of expression he tends to acquire the capacity of understanding imperatives, while, on the other hand, he himself does almost nothing more than demanding things during the earliest period of verbal activity. 'Little children demand and request, but do not describe.' Furthermore, Révész goes on to say, the child at this phase of linguistic development grasps and employs any words he has heard quite regardless of the discrimination of the grammatical categories to which they belong: everything, we may say, is here made to subserve the imperative function. When he cries 'Mama!' for example, the word does not describe the presence of mother, it rather demands an action from her. It is, we are told, towards eighteen months that the intention of real naming and description begins to appear. 'If we wish to give the words of the earliest period of child language their true characterization,' he says, 'we must keep in mind that what is essential here is not to know to what grammatical category the word used belongs, but to ascertain what the function of the word in question is :that function will almost invariably be found to be that of the imperative.'

This characteristically dynamic and volitional status of infantile speech may—of course with due caution—be made a clue to the mystery of the most primitive, prehistoric state of human language. This has been done in fact by Révész. It is really remarkable that this eminent psychologist who, in constructing his theory of the origin of language, completely ignored the possibility of a magical interpretation of speech function, has nonetheless come to recognize the theoretical necessity of inserting a stage of the 'imperative-language' *Imperativsprache* between the end of the pre-verbal stage and the beginning of all linguistic evolution, as a hypothetical phase of human language with a predominantly 'imperative' character, a primitive state where all words must have been used in a markedly volitional

sense. This is of no slight significance for the dominant theme of this book; and I shall return to this point in a later passage.

Most of the authors who have dealt with the problem of verbal magic since Ogden and Richards, have tacitly or explicitly assumed that the magical attitude of man towards language is based on the belief in a certain kind of direct relation which obtains between a word and the thing it refers to—between, that is, a Symbol and its Referent in Ogden and Richards' terminology. In the above account of the infantile formation of meaning, for example, the word is regarded as something active which, being essentially in direct conjunction with the piece of reality it means, acts effectively on the thing, produces, moves, attracts or repulses it. And this imputed relation between the word and the thing is made to account for the essence of all verbal magic. Even at the final stage of linguistic development represented by the basic triangle of Ogden and Richards with its base indicated by a dotted line (suggesting that the relation in question is merely indirect and conventional,) the magical use of language is explained by reference to the erroneously and mystically assumed direct correlation between sound and reality. This, of course is true to a considerable degree. Innumerable superstitions have, in fact, sprung from the deep-rooted belief that between language and reality there exists an essential nexus. In previous chapters we have seen how primitive people everywhere tend to confuse the word with the thing, and how this tendency is responsible for a good deal in driving man to madness and stupidity. This, though, is not the whole story. For this accounts for only the 'denotative' aspect of verbal magic. The mechanism of the magic of meaning has another no less important aspect, which is much more elusive and fugitive than the preceding one, but which must be fully analyzed if only for the reason that it will perhaps provide us with a precious key to the very difficult problem of word-meaning. I mean the 'connotative' phase of meaning as contrasted with denotation.

By the 'connotation' of a word logicians usually mean roughly the complex property or the set of properties that anything must possess in order to be called by the name, while the 'denotation' of a word is all and only the things the name rightly applies too. Thus, for example, the word 'chimpanzee' denotes all the particular animals which have a certain set of properties, and it connotes this specific character shared by no other kind of animals (cf. Max Black: *Critical Thinking*. Ch. X. 3). But here we are concerned with the pre-logical status of connotation: that is, with the problem as to how it is like before it receives any kind of logical elaboration. In order to resolve the question we must go down to the very root of the process of meaning and signification.

It may be taken as fairly certain that the occurrence of connotation, thus understood in a pre-logical way, is a psychological event. Image, idea, representation, concept, or whatever else it may prove to be, the phenomenon of meaning in its entirety cannot possibly be explained, unless sooner or later the 'mental'

is introduced. What exactly it consists in we shall see later in detail. For the moment it is sufficient to recognize that the use of name-words tends to suggest or call up into mind 'something' even before we know what they precisely denote, or (what is more important) even when there is no denotatum at all. In default of a better term we may at least for the time being, call this 'something' mental imagery. That images, or other introspectible experiences evoked by words are almost always extremely vague, blurred, and indeterminate does not in any way make them unreal. On the contrary, it is this natural wooliness of connotation-imagery that makes up, for good or ill, the inner structure of word meaning, making our language, on the one hand, an infinitely subtle, flexible, and therefore very powerful, instrument to cope with the endless variety and diversity of facts, but inducing, on the other, the human mind to indulge, consciously or unconsciously, in all sorts of mischievous magics and tricks.

The triangle-scheme devised by Ogden and Richards is based on the fundamental view that linguistic meaning at a fully developed stage centres round the act of Thought; even in the case of the discussion being confined to the world of tangible objects, the relation between a symbol and the thing it stands for is only indirect; that is, words are primarily symbols for mental imagery, not for things themselves. It would be a grave mistake, however, to argue from this that in primitive or infantile speech, the triangle is reduced to its base. We must strictly distinguish between the superstitious view of language universally held by primitive people, who erroneously assume some mystical, real relation between a symbol and its referent, and the actual process of meaning activity displayed by savages and children. In the process of infantile formation of meaning sketched above, a deeper analysis would have discovered an embryo of connotation already present.

Children, we are told, constantly utter words in order to bring things into their minds as well as into their hands. This becomes remarkably evident in those not infrequent cases where verbal appeal fails; where, that is, the thing or the person the child clamours for does not appear before him. What happens here? The object meant by a word does not come out; there actually comes out, instead, something mental, the intangible duplicate, so to speak, of that object. Here we have already the beginning of that kind of conjuring up of Spirits and Souls by means of powerful words, which is so familiar to us from innumerable ethnographical descriptions of savage life. Real, tangible objects may, and very often do, fail to respond to the child's verbal appeal. But their intangible mental duplicates never fail to do so; whenever a name is called, something shadowy is sure to appear; appear where?; in the mind? or in some other place?

It must be remarked that to children, and especially to primitive people, intangible, shadowy things are nevertheless real things; nay they are even much more real and active than their visible prototypes because of their very intangible,

invisible, and wooly nature. That which may be nothing more than simple mental imagery to our mind, is, in primitive consciousness, an active force, some mysterious entity belonging to a peculiar dimension of reality which is more 'real' than our so-called reality. And it is on this kind of super-reality that words are supposed to have an essential, infallible hold. The belief that language can exercise an influence over the world of tangible, material objects may easily be shattered by everyday experience, but the belief that words have power over the invisible duplicates, the 'doubles' so to speak, of those objects and that the 'doubles' constitute a reality of higher degree seems to be deeply rooted in the human mind, and it has even given rise to many philosophic systems of pseudo-ontology. This aspect of the problem will need further discussion below.

It will be easy to see that the connotative phase of meaning plays infinitely subtler and far more important a part in the formation of verbal magic than denotation does. As far as denotation is concerned, language has but very limited resources for magic. More often than not real things and events tend to baffle the will of the speaking magician. A good many men have wondered at the fact that, in the area of linguistic activity, so many strange superstitions have flourished and still seem to be flourishing among mankind when it requires but a little sober reflection to see through the fallacies of verbal magic, to recognize that magicians are constantly exposed to the danger of being disastrously frustrated by some unexpected turn of actual events. Indeed if we try to approach the problem of linguistic magic exclusively from the denotative aspect of meaning, we will be unable to account for the really triumphant influence it has exerted over the minds and actions of men throughout the ages. The introduction of the idea of connotation, however, effects a sudden transformation of our perspective and makes the whole problem appear in an entirely different light. It may even be said to furnish the master-key for the understanding of the magical processes of language in general. For, as we shall see more fully later, it is not denotation, but connotation that makes up the very essence of the fundamental magic of meaning with which we are principally concerned in this chapter. Connotation is the real starting-point and the ultimate meeting-place of all verbal magicans, from the humblest wizard-doctors of primitive tribes to the most sophisicated philosophers of the civilized races.

There is one important point to note in this cotext. Connotation too, one might argue, is in itself a very poor thing: at the best, simple, mental imagery; and as such it is something vague, indefinite, and quite powerless. Certainly. But we must also bear in mind that this 'poor thing' contains a mine of hidden potentialities, which, under favourable conditions, can be developed along unexpectedly divergent lines. Combined with and supported by other forces, it may become itself a terrible force. We see the most remarkable of those supporting forces in Animism, that is, in short, man's belief in the existence of soul or spirit.

The question as to whether or not magic itself originates in Animism may be left open here. It is at any rate certain that magical habits tend to spread in wild luxuriance wherever mankind reaches the stage of Animism, and that the connotative aspect of word-meaning also begins to work in such circumstances as the most productive matrix of verbal superstitions. For, as will easily be seen, with the advent of animistic beliefs what has been simple imagery transforms itself into some mysterious Spirit or Soul to be viewed with fear and awe. The utterance of a name no longer calls up the simple mental image of the object named, but calls out invariably the living-soul of it, which, though shadowy and invisible, *is* palpably there as an awful something-I-know-not-what summoned up from the unfathomable depth of oblivion. In strict theory, this would belong already to the stratum of standardized magic and not to that of the fundamental magic of verbal meaning which constitutes the main topic of the present chapter. But as it brings out better than anything else the hidden magical potentialities of connotation to which reference has been made, and as it allows us, in this way, to get a real insight into the mechanism of connotative magic, we decide it best to begin with an examination of 'connotation' against the general background of the explicitly animistic belief in separate souls.

In the celebrated opening scene of Goethe's *Faust*, we are made to witness the learned Doctor who 'has turned himself to magic, if haply through the power of Spirit and Speech many a hidden mystery may be revealed,' trying to conjure up the terrible Earth-spirit. He opens a book of magic, and his eye lights upon the secret symbol of the Earth-spirit.

A shudder
Down-wafted from the vaulted gloom
Lays hold on me!
Spirit conjured, that hovering near me art,
Unveil thyself!

(Eng. tr. Albert Latham)

Faust takes up the book and pronounces in a mysterious way the symbol of the Spirit. A ruddy flame flashes, and the Spirit appears in the flame.

Sp. Who calls to me?
F. Appalling Apparition!
Sp. Thou'st drawn me here, with might and main,
Long at my sphere hast sucked in vain,
And now —

F. Woe's me! I may not bear the vision.

This picture, though of course a piece of literature, is strangely true to the ethnographical facts which we know from other sources, and depicts the heart of of the magical process of conjuration in its most explicit form. By way of comparison I shall give another example of magical invocation taken, this time, not from literature but from the well-known Maqlū-texts of Assyria, a vast collection of real magic formulae depicting in the most vivid way the curious magical practices of an ancient people.

Here is a man who feels himself assaulted and deeply wounded by the evil influences liberated and sent forth by some unknown sorcerer or sorceress who secretly has aimed at his ruin. But he himself is versed in the art of magic, black and white. So he begins by conjuring up the occult powers of darkness (1—3); he then proceeds to complain in a piteous tone of his present mysery caused by the black magic of his enemy (4—12), asks them to come and see his present state (13—14), and appeals to them to bring terrible retribution upon the malignant and deceitful wrongdoer (15—16).

"én al-si-ku-nu-shi ilāni mu-shi-ti	(Incantation: Ye have I conjured up, Gods of night,
it-ti-ku-nu al-si mu-shi-tum kal-la-tum kut-tum-tum	With ye have I called up Night, the veiled bride.
al-si ba-ra-ri-tum qab-li-tum u na-ma-ri-tum	I have called Evening Twilight, Midnight, and Daybreak.
ash-shu kashshaptu u-kash-ship-an-ni	For a sorceress hath cast a spell upon me,
e-li-ni-tum ub-bi-ra-ni	A demon hath bound me,
ili-ia u ishtar-ia u-shis-su-u eli-ia	They have removed from me my God and my Goddess.
eli a-me-ri-ia am-ru-us a-na-ku	To my onlooker I have become woeful,
im-di-ku la ṣa-a-lu mūsha u ur-ra	I have no rest night and day.
qu-u im-ta-na-al-lu-u pī-ia	They havefilled my mouth with magic knots,
u-pu-un-ti pī-ia ip-ru-su	With flour locked up my mouth,
mē mash-ti-ti-ia u-maṭ-ṭu-u	My drinking-water they have diminished.
e-li-li nu-bu-u khi-du-ti si-ip-di	My jubilation is lamentation, my delight affliction.
i-zi-za-nim-ma ilāni rabūti shi-ma-a da-ba-bi	Come near, ye great gods! Hear my complaint!

di-ni di-na a-lak-ti lim-da	Do me justice, take notice of my state!
e-pu-ush ṣalam kashshapi-ia u kashshapti-ia	I have prepared the image of my sorcerer and that of my sorceress,
sha e-pish-ia u mush-te-pish-ti-ia	Cf my wizard and of my enchantress;
ash-kun ina shap-li-ku-nu-ma a-dib-bu-ub dini	I have placed them under your feet, I bring in my lawsuit
ash-shu i-pu-sha lim-ni-e-ti ish-te-'-a la ba-na-a-tim	Since she hath done wrong, hath contrived evil plans,
shi-i li-mut-ma a-na-ku lu-ub-luṭ	May she die, may I remain living!
kish-pu-sha ru-khu-sha ru-su-u-sha lip-pa-ash-ru."	May her sorcery, her spells and her poisons be dissolved!)

—(Gerhard Meyer: *Die assyrische Beschwörungssammlung Maqlū*, 1937, Tafel I)

It is no mere coincidence that many of the Maqlū-texts—and indeed we might say, incantations in general—begin with an invocation e. g. "irṣitum irṣitum irṣitum-ma" (Earth, earth, ay earth!), "rittu-ma rittu rittu dannatu sha ameluti" (Hand, ay hand, mighty hand of the man [i. e. of my enemy wizard]), or "Thou who hast enchanted me! Thou, who hast bewitched me! Thou, who hast cast a spell upon me! Thou, who hast oppressed me! Thou, who hast seized me! etc." It is not rare to find a whole spell composed of an enumeration of names solely. Names, in primitive thinking, are such wondrous things. And of course in order to throw a spell over a person or a thing, it is essential to have the soul of that object invoked out of the realm of darkness.

Now it would be erroneous in the extreme to suppose that the process of magical conjuration here described, being essentially a habit of savage people at the animistic stage, must have completely ceased to work among modern cultured people. For it seems highly probable that Platonic idealism has much to do with this kind of verbal magic. Reference was earlier made to the remarkable case of the French poet Mallarmé, who formulated in his famous 'Je dis fleur!—' the fundamental principle of poetic Platonism. The Absolute poet, we are told, whose complete mastery of words enables him to transform the ordinary defective language into some miraculous medium through which the Heavenly Verb manifests itself in all its starry magnificence, could by the mere utterance of the word 'fleur!' conjure up the Absolute Flower, 'the very Idea, sweet, never to be met with in any nosegay,' 'something radically different from ordinary flowers.' This contention, whether it be true or not, is enough to raise at once our suspicion that there may be a close connection between Platonism, at least in its crude and popular form, and the belief in conjuring power of the spoken words. The

Platonic theory of universals, in so for as it is a doctrine maintaining the existence of eternal Forms or Ideas behind the veil of transient appearances may be said to be based in the main on the abuse of the meaning function of language.

Furthermore, a moment's reflection will show that what is involved in our use of even the most commonplace and ordinary general words, such as dog, cat. and house, is, as far as its connotative aspect goes, essentially the same as what was observed in the magical processes of invocation described previously. True, from the view-point of the present chapter, they are all extreme cases, and to that extent they tend to represent the ordinary behaviour of our words in an unusually fantastic, deforming light. But, on the other hand, they serve to bring out the more vividly the hidden magical core of connotation and to make its most salient features loom larger than usual, which, left in normal conditions, might probably remain unnoticed. So we may profitably assume that whenever we happen to call the name of something—whether for the first time or not—we are doing exactly the same thing as doctor Faust when he calls up the Spirit of the Earth by uttering a mysterious formula, though of course on an infinitely small scale, too small indeed to be perceptible even to ourselves.

However that may be, it seems straightforwardly true that all words through their very nature as symbols are capable of conjuring up something in our minds. The spoken word evokes in the mental system of the hearer the picture, the image, the concept (simple or complex), the emotion, the reasoning, or whatever else it may be, which is occupying the mind of the speaker. This process of mental evocation, then, we can, safely take as the most fundamental act of verbal magic, though from the ordinary man's point of view it may perhaps be too fundamental or commonplace to be called 'magic' at all. At any rate, a little more thoroughgoing analysis will at once show that many, if not all, of the 'magical' effects of language which have recently received much public attention can best be explaind as simple variations or intensifications of this fundamental magic of connotative meaning. We shall now turn to the consideration of this problem.

Now, to go directly *in medias res*, the problem before us is to investigate what precisely this 'something' is ,which is brought before the mind by means of a linguistic symbol. What, in other words, is the inner structure of connotative meaning? The question, it is evident, turns out to be extremely difficult to answer, if we reflect that we are being concerned here with the natural, pre-logical status of connotation before it has received any kind of theoretical elaboration. For connotation in this sense is after all something of a mystery. It is of course always possible to try to get rid of this irrational element on the ground that it is not susceptible of scientific observation. Thus behaviourists and the extentional logicians have, as is well known, attempted in their respective province of study to abolish in the name of Science all connotative elements and to dissolve the latter altogether into denotata. Psychology *as a science* and logic *as a science*,

so they have argued, should not commit the folly of being led into futile discussions about such unscientific things, if things they are, as consciousness, images, or ideas. Only recently Charles Morris proposed to the linguists a wide program for erecting the *science* of linguistics on the basis of his 'behavioral' semiotic. (*Signs, Language and Behavior*, VIII, 2) This would mean the setting up of a semiotically, i. e., 'behaviorally' grounded metalanguage in terms of which we may talk scientifically about all linguistic phenomena without making any use of mentalistic terms.

Now I am not in any way going to deny that there is much truth in their arguments. But, however much we may sympathize with their intention of promoting intelligibility and avoiding confusion, we must also admit that in attempting to rid linguistics of the mental in the interest of scientific precision, behaviourists make a satisfactory theory of language impossible. The carrying out, for instance, of the program proposed by Morris thoroughly and consistently would, I believe, make us arrive at a false view of how our words operate in actual life. That is to say, the phenomenological analysis of meaning function of language would be impossible within the framework of scientifically determinable physical facts alone. It would seem that we cannot evade the difficulty by declaring that connotation is a mystery not permissible in any science and by simply discarding it in this way. On the contrary, any phenomenologically minded linguist should try to clear up this mystery which clings to the very nucleus of word-meaning.

One of the main reasons why behaviourists deliberately avoid all use of mentalistic terms in erecting their own metalanguage is, as we have seen, that the mentalistic categories generally recognized as such are all too ambiguous and elusive to allow of any scientific treatment. And no doubt there is a fairly plain respect in which they are right in their contention. In fact experience shows that human language begins with very vague syntheses. It is common knowledge among child psychologists that the early experiences of children are largely of undifferentiated wholes.

As R. I. Aaron has pointed out in his work *The Theory of Universals* (Ch. X), what the infantile mind is disposed to think when a name, say 'house', is mentioned in its presence is a vague, unanalysed *Gestalt* which is very often surrounded by an aura of impressions, emotions, expectations etc., to make it all the more complicated and unintelligible. But, for good or ill, this state of affairs is in no way confined to child psychology. Even in the later stages of intellectual development, the undeniable advance towards increased discrimination and differentiation does not seem to prevent the ordinary man's use of general words from being largely based on the occurrence of such unanalysed—and perhaps unanalysable—mental wholes. The great majority of the so-called 'concepts' of daily life which we have acquired somehow or other through innumerable workaday experiences are, before we begin to elaborate them for logical or scientific purposes, of the vaguest kind. They are fuzzy, undetermined and blurred, lacking the clear-cut

outline and the precise details which usually characterize the actual objects of sense-percetpion; add to it that they are in most cases floating in a hazy emotional mist. It is, to put it crudely, with such monstrous conglomerates in which a host of various indeterminate elements are inextricably bound up with each other, that we find our words ordinarily associated.

Most people tend to assume that, since they do manage to use general words in daily life successfully, they must know the precise meaning of those words. The most elementary kind of introspection is sufficient to show that this is a mistake; that there is, in reality, no such thing as one precisely defined meaning attached firmly to any of the general words we use. Quite contrary to what one might suppose at first, it is just because our words are defined with such a degree of looseness that they can be used intelligently in our ordinary thinking and speaking. According to Hume, whose doctrine Aaron has aptly called the Disposition or Propensity theory, the hearing of a name brings before the mind of the hearer a great many ideas; in addition to the central idea, it 'revives' or 'raises up' a certain custom, and this custom once awakened, the mind becomes ready to recall various other ideas. Not that these become 'really and in fact present to the mind, but only in power; nor do we draw them all out distinctly in the imagination, but keep ourselves in a readiness to survey any of them, as we may be prompted by a present design or necessity.' Hume's purpose here seems to be to argue that what is evoked in the mind by the hearing of a name-word is not merely vague and indefinite but also extremely complex. The uttered word stirs our mind; a mass of heterogeneous elements belonging to various psychic layers are awakened from their sleep; some are actually brought before the conscious mind but many of them remain just below the threshold of consciousness, ready to crowd in at any moment, making their presence felt, and forming, in this way, a more or less vaguely illumined semantic fringe.

Now all those indeterminate elements that are awakened and 'spread out in our minds' in part actually and in part only potentially, are generally considered as something largely irrelevant, or at least of secondary importance, in the semantic constitution of the word; they are, it is often held, nothing but overtones of meaning, secondary implications, and emotional colourings which float over and above the central referential meaning. This, however, seems to be an illusion. Outside the realm of strictly scientific discourse, our words generally have no sharply focussed semantic core. True, in order to be capable at all of being used with a fair amount of success in ordinary communication, a name-word must possess a nucleus of referential meaning, out of which a 'concept' as a solid core of ideal content may be developed by a sort of intellectual hyper-refinement. That the cognitive element is of supreme importance as a constituent of the connoiative meaning no one will deny. But it is not the sole constituent. Nor can we be absolutely sure that it is the most important, primary element, while all the others

are at most only of secondary significance. That is surely not always the case at the level of daily life. The natural, pre-logical status of connotative meaning is rather the unanalysed whole of multiple elements fused and funnelled somehow or other into a kind of loose but vital unity. Connotation in its natural essence, we might say, is a meaningful, recognizable whole, but it is a whole composed of astonishingly diverse elements. The phenomenological analysis of connotative meaning must start from this fundamental fact. In the following chapters we shall take up connotation as a specific topic, analyze it phenomenologically into its principal components, and see how each of them contributes in its own way towards bringing about the fundamental magic of Meaning.

Chapter VI

THE HYPOSTATIZATION OF THE CONNOTATUM

In order to deal successfully with such an elusive thing as connotation, it would be wise to begin by classifying its heterogeneous constituents and bringing them under certain well-defined rubrics. As a first rough-and-ready approximation, I propose to analyse the content of connotative meaning into four *prima facie* components: (1) referential, (2) intuitive, (3) emotional, and (4) structural. We shall see that each of these four aspects contains specific potentialities which may, if fully developed, easily give rise to a variety of remarkable techniques of genuine verbal magic.

Let us first consider the reference-component. Surely the referential aspect, being admittedly the only cognitive constituent of connotation, is, as we have just seen, generally supposed to constitute the solid, conceptual core of word-meaning. It is beyond any doubt true that the natural working of the referential function of language itself presupposes in every one of the name-words used the existence of a relatively persistent core of meaning which synthesizes the various semantic constituents together into a recognizable whole. It must be noted, however, that it is extremely doubtful if this allegedly persistent referential core is as hard and solid as it appears at first sight. The apparent solidness seems on the contrary due to an illusion generated by the very natural confusion of connotation with denotation, that is, in this case, indirect with direct reference to objects. Connotative reference, we must remember, is by definition indirect signification, and indirect signification is always characterized by vagueness and wooliness even when the medium is a logically elaborated concept. This fact, which is in itself almost a truism, tends to be overlooked in linguistic as well as logical discussion.

Most of the ordinary thing-words and process-words (and even relation-words) which we are accustomed to manipulate quite significantly without troubling ourselves about their nature, have been learned by the method of ostensive definition, that is to say, by the method of pointing with the finger (or some of its equivalents) accompanied by words. The learning of language, at least at its earlier stages, is in this way largely done by confrontation with real objects, real relations. This means that those words which we have learned ostensively have physically determined or determinable referents as their denotata. And so long as we are content with speaking or thinking by means of such empirical words alone no suspicion is likely to be aroused as to the very puzzling nature of

connotative meaning.

When, for example, looking at a table, we recognize it as the thing usually designated by the word 'table', and actually utter the word in reference to that object, everything appears to be clear and distinct; the *meaning*, i. e. the thing designated by the word (referent) is as solid as anything can be, for it is a real piece of furniture in all its tangible concretion. Now this type of experience, repeated at every moment of our daily life, may very well leave the impression that the word has a solid core of meaing, and this impression may further be carried over surreptitiously into the connotative aspect of word-meaning. In other words, we may easily be led into believing that the word, 'table', even when uttered in the absence of the empirical referent, can and does bring before the mind the *concept* of the table, which is not only reliably solid and persistent, but may perhaps be immutably fixed or even eternal and transcendental. As one can easily see, from this kind of belief in the existence of immutable concepts as mental entities it is but a little step to the *ante rem* theory of universals. Indeed, at all levels of linguistic thinking, ranging from that of daily life to that of the most serious metaphysical speculation, it has produced, and is producing, an endless number of 'bogus' entities.

What extravagant superstitions it can generate when combined with Animism we have already seen. Indeed, well-nigh half of the mad practices and beliefs of primitive people described in Chapter II may be said to have their ultimate source here. The very nucleus of all animistic belief, i. e. the belief in the existence of separate Souls which continue to exist even after the destruction of their bodily frames, seems in the last resort to be a product of the very marked tendency of the human mind to confuse connotation with denotation, or rather to project mental contents on to the external world, making, thus, out of them self-subsistent entities. In the *Rigveda*, for example, it is possible to trace almost step by step the rise of abstract deities out of divine epithets and abstract nouns. Thus we see "Dhatr" (creator), "Dhartr" (supporter), "Netr" (leader), "Prajapati" (lord of creatures) "Viçvakarman" (all-creating) etc., originally epithets of older gods, gradually come to acquire an independent value as names of individual deities. Such abstract nouns as "Aditi" (liberation), "Çrāddha" (faith), "Manyu" (wrath), "Anumati" (divine favour), etc., are formed into independent entities, personified, and hymns are addressed in their worship. The transition from Animatism to Animism, that is to say, from Mana-worship to Spirit-worship, must have been definitely effected when and where man first invented the word for the 'soul' or 'spirit'. Nor are we to suppose it confined to those far-off days when our ancestors were living in the stage of primitive simplicity and savegery. Both in East and West, even after people had passed far beyond the animistic stage, the belief in the hypostatized Soul continued to exert a tremendous influence on the human mind. Furthermore, even a good deal of controversy has been wasted in

philosophical thinking as to, for example, whether the Soul, thus conceived as a super-normal or metaphysical entity, has 'separate parts', and—in case it does, —how many distinct parts it consists of, etc. The notion has gradually attenuated itself, to be sure, and today, at least among philosophers of the Empiricist school, what used to be the disembodied divine soul is no more than the name of a non-entity. But there are hundreds of thousands of people who still cling to the notion.

The case of the Soul, though in itself a very telling example, is, we must remember, but one manifestation of the ubiquitous and very persistent tendency mentioned above, which is always ready to crop up everywhere in the verbalized way of thinking. The plain fact appears to be rather simple; it comes to this: whenever a name-word is uttered in the absence of the object, it tends to make the hearer *think* or *feel* as if he were in the presence of the object; in other words, by making the object mentally present, it tends to cause the hallucination that the thing-meant, whatever that may be, really existed. Since our early experience with language almost always warranted the actual existence of anything whatsoever named by a word, we have, it would seem, fallen unwittingly into the bad habit of expecting a substantival entity to exist whenever we hear a general word uttered. However that may be, it is a historical fact that not only ordinary men but even the profoundest philosophers have very often attributed to the imaginary sphere of hypostatized connotations a special reality of its own. Besides, from the viewpoint of the traditional ontology which recognizes *potentia* as a special manner of existing as distinguished from *actus*, there is certainly a sense in which there is no essential difference between the idea of the object X existing and the idea pure and simple of the object X, for, as Kant emphasized in his criticism of the ontological argument, it is impossible to represent an object without attributing to it a certain amount of existence, be it that of a mere possible. This means that by the very fact of being represented, the object X has already gained some kind of existence, for it does exist at least as a mere possible. And the possible existence of an object once posited, it is but an easy step from there to our erecting that possible object into a real object. A huge number of such pseudo-entities are thus generated; they are then supposed to live in a real world of their own; in this way the Platonic realm of Ideas comes to being.

In his two important works *Plato's Earlier Dialectic* (Ch. V, § 2) and *Definition* (Ch. VI § 1—13) Richard Robinson has shown how unfortunate it was for the history of Western Philosophy that it began, so to speak, with the Socratic question of the form 'What is X?' since it was 'the vaguest of all forms of question except an inarticulate.' The What-is-X? question, as a request for a definition, was first taken in Plato's early dialogues as the search for an identical meaning in all the actual applications of a name-word. This is to forget the basic fact that all words are by nature ambiguous, and that this applies not merely to general words and abstract terms but also to the so-called logical terms. (See the very interesting

chapter on 'Ambiguity in Language' in John Holloway's *Language and Intelligence* Ch. IX). The assumption that our words are univocal is central to the theory of Ideas developed by Plato in his early and middle dialogues. 'What is piety?' (*Euthyphro*), 'What is virtue?' (*Meno*) 'What is justice?' (*Republic*) 'What is the soul?' (*Phaedo*), etc. —all these questions explicitly assume that since various (and apparently very divergent) things are habitually called by one and the same name, there must be one and the same thing which is invariably meant every time one uses the term. The man and the woman, if they are to be good, both need the virtue; the young and the old likewise. Indeed all those who are good become good by partaking of the same virtue. And then? The original search for an identical meaning of a word thus develops most naturally into the search for the Essence, for the mistaken assumption of the univocity of word-meaning involves in itself a certain sort of realism as opposed to nominalism. Aristotle defined definition as the statement of the essence of a thing. That is to say, the correct answer, if there be such, to the What-is-X? question is to give the ontological essence of X, which is in fact simply inexistent in the sense intended. In short, both Plato and Aristotle mistook the connotative meaning of a word for a metaphysical reality (see in particular the analysis of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Z 4—6 by Robinson in *Definition* p. 154; see also Léon Brunschvicg, *Les Ages de l'Intelligence* p. 66—66).

The mechanism of this hypostatization of meaning will come out more clearly if we alter the example and go to those cases where the word used means something that never occurs or that does not exist in the real world as we experience it: e. g. the so called secondary or imaginative concepts representing fabulous or mythological beings such as 'unicorn', 'dragon', etc., or those mental constructs containing a downright self-contradiction such as 'a round square', or again the idea of the Absolute Nothing. In the last of these cases in particular, there is in the very nature of the matter evidently nothing to be imagined, nothing to be represented, nothing even to be conceived. The idea of an absolute absence or void is, as Bergson so brilliantly showed in *L'Evolution Créatrice*, either a mistaken and misleading substitute for partial nothingness or a self-destructive pseudo-idea, for the absolute annihilation of everything would of necessity involve destroying the very mental operation by which this idea is formed. And yet, curiously enough, when we hear the word 'Nothing', we feel as if we had actually the image of 'Nothing' in our mind. We are prone to suppose that there *is* something corresponding to the word, and this something may again very easily be projected on to the external world to become the terrifying phantom of the *Néant*. This process of reification once completed consciously or even unconsciously, it becomes feasible for us to treat 'Nothing' as if it were 'Something' and to speak, for instance, of 'encountering Nothing' (*Begegnung mit dem Nichts*), as some existentialists do, in just the same way as a mythological hero encounters

a dragon. Heidegger's 'nothinging of Nothing' (*das Nichten des Nichts*) as the ultimate source of all negation is a good example in point. 'And what about this Nothing ?,' he asks himself in his famous lecture '*Was ist Metaphysik* ?' (1929), 'Does Nothing exist only because there is Not, i. e. Negation ? Or is it just the other way round ? Do Negation and Not exist only because there is Nothing ?' (Gibt es das Nichts nur, weil es das Nicht, d. h. die Verneinung gibt ? Oder liegt es umgekehrt ? Gibt es Verneinung und das Nicht nur, weil das Nichts gibt ?) And in answer to his own question Heidegger declares that Nothing is the origin of all negation, not the other way about; that Negation occurs through Not, which, in its turn, arises through the nihilating activity of Nothing. Here, in spite of all that he says against taking it as an object that *is*, Nothing is clearly conceived as a sort of transcendent substratum which is eternally prior to all being and on which all reality is extended as an embroidery on a carpet. (cf. Carnap, *Überwindung der Metaphysik*, Erkenntnis, Bd II; see further Alfred Ayer, *Language, Truth aud Logic*, Chap I.)

The problem of negation is in itself a huge topic, the detailed consideration of which is no doubt beyond the scope of the present treatise. Nor have I any intention of maintaining that it is possible to reduce the ontological problem of not-being to a mere linguistic problem. The point I should like to make is only that negation, at least as a linguistic phenomenon, can never be sufficiently accounted for without introducing some sort of mental activity, an element of mental construction or fabrication. For there is in point of fact no negation to be met with in the world of 'things'. As Bergson maintains, a purely empirical and passive mind, docilely keeping step with experience, could never receive an imprint of negation; for such a mind there would be no nought, even partial or relative. Negation comes in with consciousness. And once formulated in words, it becomes symmetrical with affirmation; it causes the illusion as if it affirmed an objective not-being, no less objetcive and real than the being affirmed by affirmation. The fact has been admirably brought out by Jean-Paul Sartre in his account of *l'être-pour-soi*, i. e. human consciousness claimed to be endowed with the peculiar power of nullifying (*néantiser*) as opposed to *l'être-en-soi* which is full and compact. Only the consequence which he draws from a sophisticated elaboration of this basic distinction is as fantastic as anything can be: 'Nothing' is the Absolute. (cf. F. H. Heinemann: *Existentialism and the Modern Predicament*, Ch. VII, 3). It would be natural to suppose either that the philosopher dazzled by the brilliancy of his own logic, has himself fallen victim to the magical enticement of the word, or else—which is more probable—that he is deliberately and intentionally attempting to throw a spell over his reader. In any case this reveals the extreme danger to which one is exposed, when one begins to manipulate negation and negativities at the level of verbal thinking.

There is another way of formulating the part of mental fabrication involved in negation, which is the way taken by modern logicians; it consists in emphasizing the 'secondary language' character of negation. Reference was already made in an earlier chapter to Bertrand Russell's thesis that negation presupposes the existence of the object language or a language stratum a degree lower than that to which negative words belong. Two propositions 'there is cheese' and 'there is not cheese', though apparently referring directly to the objective world, and therefore seeming to stand exactly on the same footing, belong in reality to two entirely different levels of discourse, for the latter proposition is not based upon our immediate sensible experience in the same sense in which the former obviously is. In Russell's terminology, there is a definite empirical occurrence which is seeing cheese, but there is no occurrence which could be described as 'not seeing cheese', for one can see what each thing is, but not what it is not. If, after having looked at everything in the larder, you say, 'There is no cheese in the larder', you have *judged* this, you have not *seen* it. (*An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* Ch. IV, p. 73). This is to say that a negative proposition always involves the rejection of a pre-existent word or of a suggested connotation. Disappointed expectation is what brings NOT into our lives, writes H. H. Price in *Thinking and Experience* (Ch. V.) Even at the level of pre-verbal thinking, negative signification is said to be unable to occur *in vacuo*. If, speaking generally, X is to operate as a sign of not-B, there must be something about the X situation which suggests the thought of B. There occurs a clash between what we have been expecting (B) and what we actually experience (A), and this causes the negative experience of not-B. It will be easy to see that this is much more the case with negation at the level of verbalized thought. The clash beteen the word 'cheese' or its connotation that we have already in mind and what we actually see is what makes us say, 'This is not cheese'. Or, if we take into account the fundametnal fact of the co-existence of a listener with the speaker in linguistic phenomena in general, we may say with A. H. Gardiner (*Speech and Language*, § 72) that, genetically if not psychologically, negative statement is the affirmative statement of a real or supposed speaker into which the listener's exclamation of refusal has been incorporated. Thus while 'He is rich' simply affirms, 'He is not rich' would imply, on this view, 'You may have thought he was rich, but he is not.' (§73) At any rate, in order that we might say 'He is not rich', the affirmative sentence 'He is rich' must be reproduced as a whole so as to act as a basis for a secondary judgement.

Nor is this way of viewing negation something new in the history of human thought. Aristotle already seems to have held some such opinion; at least he emphasizes in more passages than one the essential priority of affirmation ('The affirmative proposition is prior to and better known than the negative, since affirmation explains denial and is prior to it, just as being is prior to not-being' *Anal. Post* I, 25, 87 b, 33; 'The first class of proposition is the simple affirmation, and after that, the negation' *De Inter.* 17a, 8-9—the word 'first' [prōtē] must be taken here in the usual Aristotelian sense of 'primary' or 'primordial'). But there was

too much of a realist in Aristotle for this basal conception to be developed in the direction indicated above. In India, in the Golden Age of civilization, literature and philosophy (Vth. century A. D.) the Buddhist logicians greatly stressed the 'syllogistic' or 'hypothetical' nature of negative propositions. In opposition to the then prevailing opinions which tended to make in some way or other a sort of Being out of not-Being, Dharmakirti, for instance, tried to show that it is against the very essence of perception to perceive something non-existent; that not being is merely hypothetical and that what is generally called not-being is in reality a complex mental workmanship, consisting as it does in the representation of the real substratum (i. e. a given place) plus that of an imagined object which would have been perceived if it had been present in that place. The idea of an absent waterpot, for example, is nothing more than its hypothetical perceptibility in an expected place. (cf. Th. Stcherbatsky: *La théorie de la connaissance et la logique chez les Bouddhistes tardifs*, Fr. tr. Ch. XVI.) Among European logicians Sigwart appears to be the first to have put forth a similar theory. We might also mention the name of Bergson who insisted on the 'subjective character' of negation arguing that it springs from the disappointment of a real or imaginary expectation, and analysed negative propositions of the type 'A is not B' into two principal thoughts, viz. (1) that one might believe that A is B, (2) that, however, B is replaced in fact by a certain indeterminate quality X.

But even today there are still many among first-rate thinkers who would not subscribe to this kind of opinion. Morris Cohen, to give one instance, in *A Preface to Logic* (p. 34) asserts that the assumption that negative statement has no direct reference to the objective world but involves the rejection of a suggested idea, is based on a confusion. There is, on his view, no good reason for denying that negative and positive judgements are correlative, for, he says, we can very well refer to one and the same state of fact in both ways, positively and negatively; there is no difference in objectivity, for example, between saying 'These lines are parallel' and saying 'These lines do *not* intersect.' This criticism, however, seems to be itself based on a confusion or rather on an imperfect analysis of *verbalized* thinking. We must note that, at the level of thinking in or with words, 'not intersect' stands in a negative-positivie opposition to 'intersect', not to 'parallel'; we can not say 'The lines do not intersect' without reproducing in its entirety the positive statement 'The lines intersect'.

All this may seem an entirely useless digression. It has been necessary, however, to insist on the 'séondary language' character of negation in order to bring out the more clearly the fictive, or we might say, magical power of NOT. If it be true, as J-P. Sartre has held, that in the world of *êtres-en-soi* there is no negativity, and that the latter element comes only from human consiousness which is in itself something negative, I may, perhaps, not be suggesting too fantastic an idea in speaking of the *magical* working of negative terms. Indeed, we might go

even further and say that, since the positing of a simple (positive) idea in the form of the connotation of any word may, as we saw a few pages back, itself be regarded as a magical act in that it is in a certain sense a sort of conjuring up of an invisible power, the negating of that positve idea will be, so to speak, doubly magical. To negate a word or a complex of words would be, on this interpretation, to try to wipe out what one has just written; or to use magical terminology, it would de equivalent to the act of repelling or warding off a spirit one has just called up by uttering its name; it is to try to conjure up a spirit and to conjure it away almost at the same time. We must remember that however short the interval may be, this act is clearly composed of two moments or *tempos*, namely conjuring up and conjuring away. It is, we may assume, the difference between these two *tempos* that would correspond, at a higher level of rational thinking, to the difference of stratum between primary and secondary language.

I should like to emphasize that this must not be taken as a mere figure of speech. At the logical level of language, denying a statement *p* may be equated with asserting the falsehood of *p*. But in the pre-logical phases of thinking and speaking, there is much to suggest that negation, i. e, the denial of something previously posited, has an in greater or lesser degree magical implication. The point was very well brought out by H. Ammann, (*Die menschliche Rede* II. Teil, Nachwort) when he emphasized the existence of a specific symbolic-suggestive use of negation which is so frequent in ordinary speech. In sentences like '*Nur, der Mann wird (hoffentlich) nicht grade heute kommen*', he detected (justly to my mind) 'a sort of magical warding off of something feared' (*eine Art von magischer Abwehr des Befürchteten*). 'This moment of warding off,' he says, 'belongs beyond any doubt to the most original and primitive function of negation; the command to stop doing something is most emphatically brought to expression by a loud "No!!; a bad news is very often received by the terrified hearer with gestures and words implying defence, such as exclaiming "No, no!" and making the motion of stopping the ears.' It is important to note in this connection that many languages have gone a step further and developed an important class of negative words specifically designed to serve the magical purpose of warding off evils, as opposed to, and side by side with, 'ordinary' means of negation—the *apotropeic* negation, if we may call it so.

Now this phenomenon is exceedingly common in the Indo-European languages, the contrast between these two sorts of negation being represented already in Proto-I. E. by the pair * *mē* (prohibitive)—* *ne* (simple): Sanscrit, "mā" as opposed to "na" (e. g. "Ma no ghoreṇa caratābhi dhṛṣṇu" *RV.* x, 34. 'Bewitch us not forcibly with magic', "Mākir neçan, mākīṃ riṣan, mākīṃ saṃ çāri kevaṭe" *RV.* vi, 54. Let no one be lost! Let it not be hurt! Let it not be crushed in a pit!'); Greek, "mē" as opposed to "ou" (e. g. "Mē dē nêas helōsi" *Il.* xvi, 128, 'May they not seize the ship!') etc. But this is in no way limited to the Indo-

European family; indeed the phenomenon may very well be described as universal, since we meet with the same kind of distinction in many languages belonging to diverse linguistic families, as for example: Hebrew "al" in opposition to "lō", Sumerian "bara", "nam", "na", as opposed to "nu", Ancient Chinese "wu" as opposed to "pu", Burmese "ma…ne" as opposed to "ma…phu", Malay "djangan" as opposed to "tidak" etc., etc.

We have hitherto been chiefly concerned with words standing for outwardly observable—or imagined to be so observable—objects, qualities, and situations, whether posited or negated. There remains to be discussed another class of words standing for those occurrences which are observable only in an introspective way. Regarding this class of words, which is by no means less important than the preceding one, it must be noticed at once that here not merely connotata but also denotata themselves are mental, denoting as they do such 'inner' states, emotions or feelings, as love, hatred, jealousy and the like. As has been argued above, connotation is in any case more or less vague and indefinite, but at the same time it will have to be admitted that in such words as have been discussed so far, the denotata, being principally 'real' qualities, 'real' events, or 'real' relations, are sufficiently definite and fixed; they are at least solid enough to resist any attempt to change them in an arbitrary and wilful way. With words having 'inner' denotata, on the contrary, this is far from being the case, for in this class of words the very denotata are themselves of the vaguest possible sort. Not that these words lack denotata; there is, I think, no possible reason for denying the real existence of such mental states as represented by words like 'love', 'hatred', etc. The point is that these 'inner' denotata are by their very nature infinitely more elusive, subtle, and fugitive than 'outer' denotata; they lack sharp outlines; they have no precise colour; they are variable and unsteady, each having always an extensive borderland of uncertainty and freedom. Moreover, by far the greater number of mental states we experience are so blurred and indeterminate that they could never possibly be put into words. Even those which are customarily described by such words as 'love' and 'hatred', which, therefore, usually appear to us as pretty unambiguous, will, on a closer examination, turn out to be of a very puzzling status. Love and hatred are two entirely different attitudes of mind, to be sure; no one, it might seem, would confuse them; and yet, the two are not independent and distinguished from each other in the way a table is a table and not possibly a chair. This said, it will at once be understandable that here, if anywhere, is a suitable place for sophisticated verbal magicians to revel in their orgies.

Before we go further in our discussion, it will be well to pause a while and ponder two significant facts concerning word-to-object correlations: first, that ostensive definition is not in any way the sole means of acquiring vocabulary; that even among the words of common usage there are many that have been acquired

through word-word definition where the proper use of one word is taught and learned in terms of some other word or words. This, however, seems to imply that by simply manipulating or combining pre-existent connotata we can produce a new, independent connotatum having — or appearing to have—reference to a certain denotatum. Secondly, the fact that, as there is no natural (much less divine) correlation between the level of words and that of things, there is (theoretically at least) ample room for every individual to use any word he chooses in whatever way he chooses. In view of the essentially non-necessary character of linguistic symbols, there is certainly a respect in which Humpty Dumpty (in *Alice through the Looking-glass*) was fundamentally right when he insisted that words should mean what he chose that they should. The problem has been brilliantly discussed by Richard Robinson in the above-quoted book on *Definition* (Ch. IV) under the title of 'stipulative definition'. I have already referred to the erroneous nature of the ordinary person's assumption that there is some one definitely fixed correct meaning for each word, all other meanings having to be either reduced to it or condemned as improper and incorrect. The principle of free stipulation justly insists upon everybody's right to make any word mean anything he likes. Now as a matter of fact, this kind of entire freedom of semantic stipulation is hampered to a great extent in the case of words having outwardly observable things and events as their denotata, by the sensation of hardness they tend to give us, which, crystallized in the form of lexical or customary meaning, seems to resist strenuously to any attempt of violent departure from usage. Let us notice that this resisting power of customary meaning turns out to be much weaker in words standing for mental states, for in this case the customary meaning can hope to get very little support from the side of denotation; there is consequently much more room for free stipulation. But even here, and even when one has stipulated a new arbitrary meaning for a word with a considerable amount of success, it is still very rare to find the customary meaning cancelled completely and once for all by the new stipulation. For the dignity of customary meaning, having all the weight of tradition and popular sanction behind it, can never be made to waver so easily. Thus whenever one tries to control the existing order of word-meaning by an act of stipulation, there inevitably occurs a clash between the two competing powers. And this clash is liable of causing remarkable effects on our ways of thinking, especially when it occurs on purpose.

Let me, by way of illustration, cite a remarkable case, again from J.-P. Sartre. In *L'Etre et le Néant* he gives a very characteristic description of 'love'. Love, to give here his conclusion only, is a despotic 'appropriation of the Other', 'the enslavement of the Other's liberty in so far as it is liberty, that is to say, his liberty in itself.' (*E. et N.* p. 442, 473). Now this Sartrian picture of 'love', as a despotic subjugation of the beloved person and the deprivation of his or her personal liberty, has justly raised storms of protest. Thus Benoit Pruche in his

L'homme de Sartre has criticized it as 'nothing more than an atrocious caricature, the most perfect negation of love that can be imagined.' Love carried on to this degree of contortion, he says, is no love at all, 'it is just frantic egoism, and has nothing but a verbal similitude with "love", and a very dubious one at that. It would be much better to pull off the mask and give the Sartrian love its true name: hatred' (p. 122). It would be much better indeed; at least much simpler, if everyone adhered strictly to the principle of always calling a dog a dog and a cat a cat even in the domain of emotions and feelings. But is it in fact possible? Captain Fellows in *The Power and Glory* believes that it is: 'It was his one firm conviction that he really felt the correct emotions of love and joy and grief and hate.' But this was perhaps nothing more than his personal, subjective conviction. Reference has earlier been made to the very woolly status of mental occurrences — and that already in the domain of denotation. The 'mental' denotata are far from constituting clearly delimited regions; there are so many overlappings, uncertain borderlands, transitional stages and strange mixtures. This is naturally much more the case with their connotata. There is no 'standard meaning' of love to mark it off from all other similar or related emotions. Many thinkers have taken advantage of this curious state of our mental terms, and Sartre no doubt is one of them.

Suppose Sartre really decided to obey Benoit Pruche and consented to calling everything by its customary name: what happens? The moment he substituted his '*amour*' by '*haine*', there would perhaps be nothing particularly interesting left out of his whole philosophizing about this aspect of human existence. For this philosophizing is based precisely on the essential ambiguity of words standing for mental states. The peculiar charm of his theory of love lies in the fact that the word 'love' is here endowed with a double connotation. He keeps the term 'love', and thereby retains the customary connotation of this term, but, at the same time, he surreptitiously introduces into it the usual connotation associated with the word 'hatred', mixes them up, and succeeds in bringing out a monster of love in the mind of the reader. Thus by means of inter-verbal definition, that is, by a clever handling of connotata, an ingenious philosopher may conjure up any monster he likes and make it parade as a real being before the eyes of the astounded laymen.

Non-empirical thinking is perhaps one of the most salient features of human intelligence. This is made possible to a very large extent by the capacity displayed by our words of being freely defined in an inter-verbal way. But this again, is made possible by the intervention of connotata between words and things-meant. Connotation, working as it does independently of the immediate environmental factors, makes our verbal-thinking largely autonomous. As H. H. Price has shown (*op. cit.* Ch. IV,) the characteristically human way of thinking and speaking is usually very little affected by what is actually going on in the physical environment.

In his terminology, verbal thinking is 'free', while mere sign-thinking as displayed by intelligent animals is 'tied'. This would amount to saying that language and reality—whatever the latter may prove to be—constitute two different planes, which, though interrelated with each other in the most intricate way, are in principle quite independent and autonomous. For the plane of language, in so far at least as pure connotation goes, is nothing but a world of conjured-up phantoms. And thus we can now begin to see why our words never vouch for the reality of their meanings. The world of connotation is a world where such inexistent things as 'dragons' 'unicorns' or 'phlogiston' can very well parade in exactly the same capacity as 'dogs 'and 'tables'; but if this is possible it is simply because, in this world, even dogs and tables are after all mere conjured-up phantoms.

Chapter VII

THE EVOCATIVE POWER OF WORDS

Now we turn to the second of the constituents of connotative meaning as distinguished at the beginning of the foregoing chapter: the intuitive element. The primary function of the referential aspect of connotation with which we have been concerned at some length is, in short, to describe or picture reality — the term 'reality' here being taken in the broadest sense of the term. Of all the aspects of connotation this is undoubtedly the one which stands in the closest relation to the denotative phase of meaning. Connotation, however, has another aspect which also pictures reality, but in a way quite different from the referential description, and which, furthermore, must not be confused with the of feelings and emotions as it would be if we are to adopt the strictly *dual* theory of meaning functions as set forth by I. A. Richards in *Principles of Literary Criticism* (cf. Ch.XXXIV). Following Marshall Urban, who again follows K. Otto Erdmann in this matter, we may call it an intuitive (*anschaulich*) way of picturing the world. The position, as distinguished from that of the followers of the dual theory, might be briefly expressed by saying that all that is not referential in connotation is not necessarily emotive. There is, that is to say, a middle term between conceptual meaning and emotional evocation, which is, therefore, half referential and half evocative, if we may put it so. It is referential in that it does in some fashion refer to the extra-linguistic reality, the contextual situation in which the denotatum is experientially presented; it is evocative in that the way it presents to our mind the living reality is very simillar to, and in fact often inextricably bound up with, emotional evocation.

The point is that language has an intrinsic expressiveness of a very peculiar sort: besides the well-known functions of directly referring to the 'things meant' and of arousing feelings and emotions, it has a certain power of making the 'things meant' real and alive once again at the level of linguistic expression. It is not exactly the power to evoke images, for imagery, though in actual fact it is very often a powerful help to intuition, is not in itself a necessary ingredient of the intrinsic expressiveness of which we are now speaking. It is rather a peculiar power of evoking something of the living reality, the very colour and flavour of the living concrete which surrounds the denotatum of a word. This intuitive character of language making us relive objects, situations and characters in their immediate concreteness, Marshall Urban has rightly called the *vis poetica* of words

(*Language and Reality*, Ch. X, III, A; Ch. IV, II, C). He holds that when a poet sings, for example 'red blooms the rose' or 'wild blows the wind', those words place the hearer immediately in a living landscape where winds are blowing and flowers blooming; they conjure up, so to speak, a living reality. This power of conjuring up reality is in fact most conspicuously manifested in the poetic use of language. The most indispensable attribute of poetic language, as Philip Wheelwright says, is its radical particularity of reference, its presentative immediacy; 'it presents as well as represents' (*The Burning Fountain*, Ch. V.)

Now viewed from the psychological standpoint, this may be simply one of the ordinary functions of imagination. And in fact Wheelwright has attributed this kind of *vis poetica* to what he has called 'confrontative imagination', which is said to act upon its object by particularizing and intensifying it. From a semantic point of view, however, it seems to be something more than that. For the power here spoken of to make things real and active in language belongs in a sense to the very semantic constitution of linguistic symbols. We may, if we like, look at the matter the other way round and say that there is a poet in very one of us and that this poet dwelling in each of us plays a very remarkable role in making the human way of handling symbols quite different from the sign-behaviour of animals. The poetic evocation of imaginative powers is an essential or intrinsic charater of human language as such. To this, and only to this, extent were the German Romantic school and its Italian counterpart right in maintaining the fundamental identity of *Ursprache* and *Urpoesie*. In fact, all speech is, in a certain sense, poetry. For poetry it certainly is that makes up the internal difference between animal cries and linguistic symbols in rendering the latter bearers of infinitely subtle and complex meanings. On condition that we undertand poetry and the poetic in the sense indicated above, we may safely assert that every name-word is invariably endowed with an intrinsic *vis poetica*, the manifestation of which, though usually remaining unnoticed in much everyday intercourse and coming to the fore only when keyed to the highest pitch in the so-called 'poetic' use of language, is in reality essential to the constitution of the connotative meaning as such. For without it words would lack what we may call the *sphere* of applicability.

When we approach the problem of the *Urpoesie* of lingustic symbols in a mood free from any romantic intoxication, we notice at once the important fact that every name-word has more or less limited, latent possibilities of association. It is indeed remarkable that, when a word is uttered, in the absence or in the presence of the denotatum, all these latent possibilities of association immediately get into the state of activatedness; they are, in other words, at once brought to mind, some *in actu* some *in potentia*. It is this tendency of the word of activating a certain number of associative possibilities in our minds that determines and delimits the sphere of its primary applicability; the utterance of a word tends to delimit, we might say, a certain space in the real or imaginary world of being

of which the denotatum froms part. The very vivid sense of reality, of 'the radical particularity of reference', of 'very quality, tone and flavour of the concrete qua concrete' (Wheelright), which is considered, as we saw earlier, the most essential characteristic of poetic language, is but the effect of an artistic intesification of this fundamental and necessary function of language of evoking the extra-verbal situation linked associatively with the denotatum of a given word.

Karl Bühler (*Sprachtheorie* III, § 11) has called this function the *Stoff*, or the 'material' aspect, of word-meaning, and insisted on the importance of recognizing the 'material steering' *Stoffliche Steuerung* in any operation with verbal symbols. 'The mere occurrence, so he tells us, of the word "radish" is enough to bring at once the reader to the dining-table or into the garden; that is to say, into a certain "sphere" quite different from that to which the word 'ocean', for example, would take him.' It is quite true that a general word can have no definite meaning except in what Ogden and Richards have described as the context of situation. But it is also important to note, on the other hand, that a single word, even when taken out of its vital situational context and thus deprived of all linguistic as well as extralinguistic supports, has still something of the 'flavour' of its own sphere, retains something of the situational. Given, for instance, a set of separate words taken at random and without any context: 'ocean', 'tree' 'sing', 'table', 'ship', 'bird', 'read', flower', 'wave', 'book'; it would not be difficult for the ordinary person to recognize in this medley of words the existence of three diverse spheres each with its own point of crystallization attracting around it almost irresistibly a certain number of words, and producing thus a natural order out of the given disorder; namely, (1) ocean—wave—ship, (2) tree—flower—bird —sing, (3) table—read—book. It is some such situational sphere which properly belongs to every one of the name-words, or rather, to which it properly belongs, that predetermines the limits of its applicability and thereby also the range of its possible inter-verbal associations. Between the noun 'sparrow' and the verb 'chirp', for example, there is as it were a natural tie, belonging as they do to the same sphere of application. Between, say, 'table' and 'chirp', contrariwise, we see no such relationship. When we hear someone say, 'there blows····,' we need not ask him 'What is it that you say is blowing?,' for the verb evokes by its own virtue the connotation of the noun 'wind'. Verbs like 'blow', 'flow', 'chirp', etc., carry on their fronts, so to speak, the definite marks of their 'subjects'. And in general, the utterance of a name-word tends to arouse at once in the hearer a state of preparedness or expectation for a certain number of other name-words. This phenomenon of inter-verbal semantic evocation has been well brought out by Ernst Leisi in *Der Wortinhalt* (Heidelberg, 1953), who has called it the 'semantic con cord' (*semantische Kongruenz*) of words on the analogy of the well-known phenomenon of grammatical concord.

Thus we see that the *Urpoesie* residing in every name-word, works in a very

peculiar manner in two divergent but closely related ways: extraverbally and intra-verbally. Extra-verbally it evokes a living reality; it makes us *re*-experience things, qualties, events and situations as they have been lived through in the primary experience. Intra-verbally it evokes the (often very complex) net of connotations formed by a set of words, belonging more or less loosely to the same 'material' sphere. In either way, be it noted again, the *Urpoesie* is evocation. The fact comes to clearest consciousness when we examine the phenomenon of metaphor which plays beyond any doubt the most significant role in the constitution and development of human language. To put it crudely, metaphor is a sort of double evocation. It arises whenever a name-word is transposed from its proper domain to some other sphere of being on the strength of some likeness perceived or felt between two things from different fields of experience; as, for example, when we call a man 'a fox' — transfer of the noun from the *animal* sphereto which its properly belongs to a completely different *human* sphere — or when the verb 'bloom' is carried over from the flower to the woman, or again when we speak of a 'sweet melody', transferring a word which belongs primarily to the sphere of gustatory sensation to that of auricular sensation.

In trying to elucidate the nature of metaphor with special regard to its evocative power, it would perhaps be a wise policy to follow Ernst Leisi (op. cit. III, C. 4) in dividing it into two principal kinds: viz. direct metaphor and indirect metaphor, though the adjectives 'direct' and 'indirect' do not seem to be very happily chosen ones, or may perhaps be even positively misleading as we shall presently see. As an example of the former class Leisi gives *Die Steine reden*, and of the latter *Die Steine schweigen*. It would at once leap to the eye that the realm of 'direct' metaphors can properly be no other than the world of sheer myth and fantasy. Direct metaphor is a product of imagination; it is purely subjective; one just feels as if stones were talking; it is based on no real likeness or similitude perceived, metaphor *sine fundamento in re* as we might say. Baudelaire, in his celebrated *Invitation au Voyage*, depicted a miraculous *Chambre* where all its old and familiar pieces of furniture talk to thee nchanted soul of the poet in its *douce langue natale*. In fairy-tales we often meet with tables and chairs talking among themselves. But these and the like are all experiences springing from the source of the imaginative faculty of human mind. It is essential to recognize that, when we say 'Tables and chairs are talking,' the transfer of the verb 'talk' from a human context to an inanimate sort of context, has no other ground than that we have formed, in an entirely subjective or arbitrary way, a fantastic mental picture of pieces of furniture talking secretly with each other as if they were human beings. The transfer is not based on any sort of real likeness, that is, a likeness really characteristic of the things compared, for evidently tables and chairs are not in the state of producing, except of course in fables and fairy-tales, anything that may be properly compared to human voice. The magical import of direct

metaphor is too obvious to be worth pointing out. The mechanism of this kind of metaphor is through and through evocation; it bears witness in the most striking way to the great power of words of 'conjuring up' phantoms and illusions. Little wonder, therefore, that it has always played, and is still playing, a tremendous role in the formation of the *Weltanschauung* of primitive man, peopling his world with a host of spirits and ghosts to whom all sorts of fantastic acts are attributed. It needs no special stressing, however, that, from the standpoint of the present chapter which aims at analysing the more fundamental structure of word-meaning, the direct metaphor, in comparison with the 'indirect' one, is clearly derivative and of only secondary importance.

The indirect metaphor, exemplified above by the sentence 'the stones are dumb,' is of supreme importance for our present purpose in that its working has penetrated into the very tissue of the semantic constitution of most of our words and has become thereby ingrained into our common habits of expression. While the direct metaphor is, as we have just seen, a mere product of our imagination, in the indirect kind of metaphor the transfer of a word is based on the intuition of some real likeness of relations. It is, so to speak, metaphor *cum fundamento in re*. If we call a sly and cunning man a fox, it is simply because we have perceived something about the man reminding us of the characteristic slyness of the fox. If we call a meadow covered with flowers a 'smiling meadow' it is because we have perceived some sort of likeness between the joyous view of the beautiful meadow and the look of a human face brimming with smile. The objective fact expressed by the sentence 'the stones are dumb,' that is, the natural muteness of stones, is neither purely imaginary nor false to reality, because stones are in fact voicelss. In contrast to such a sentence as 'the stones are talking among themselves' which is sheer fantasy and has nothing at all to do with truth-value, the sentence before us is based on empirical facts, from which, moreover, it derives its truth-value. Only the rule of 'semantic concord' is ignored. As Leisi points out, the word 'stone' classifies the thing for which it stand as something belonging to the sphere of speechless things, while the adjective 'dumb' —or the German verb 'schweigen'— classifies the thing as something essentially endowed with speech; only those things that are capable of speaking under normal conditions, can properly be said to be 'dumb' when not in the state of exercising that function. So there is here a semantic incongruity between the subject and the predicate. It is the combination of these two points, viz. the presence of some real basis for comparison and the absence of semantic concord, which brings indirect metaphor to being.

As one would except, this kind of metaphor in the capacity of one of the fundamental modes of Analogy has been since the Middle Ages subjected to repeated discussions among philosophers and theologians of the Thomist tradition tn their treatment of the celebrated concept of *analogia entis*. Thus James F. Anderson,

a representative modern exponent of the theory, devotes a whole chapter of his book *The Bond of Being* to the elucidation of meaning of the metaphor. The scholastic way of approach is completely different from the method of linguistic analysis; being essentially part of metaphysics it is, viewed from the semanticists' standpoint, undoubtedly too one-sided, but we must at the same time remember that the ontological treatment peculiar to the scholastics does give some remarkable sidelights on how metaphor works. The scholastics begin by distinguishing three principal modes of Analogy: (1) analogy of attribution, (2) analogy of metaphor, and (3) analogy of proper proportionality. Analogy of attribution or of simple proportion, as it is sometimes called, is, in brief, the case of comparing many things to one and the same things, as when we apply the term 'healthy' or 'healthful' to such diverse things as man, medicine, complexion, and diet, in virtue of the (diverse) relations they bear to one and the same concept, namely the health of the animal. Medicine is called 'healthful' because it restores health; complexion is called 'healthy' because it is a sign of health. In each case the relation introduced is obviously different, but the 'thing' to which these diverse relations are referred is identically the same, the health of the animal. (cf. Anderson, *The Bond of Being* Ch. VIII)

Analogy of metaphor, we are told, is something midway between this and the third kind of analogy, that of 'being', which is claimed to be the only type deserving to be called analogical in the strict and proper sense of the word. This last claim concerning the truly and properly analogical nature of 'being' need not be examined here. Now analogy of metaphor, we are told, resembles that of attribution in that it, too, is operative only in the order of univocal concepts, that is, operates with a concept which is in itself not analogical at all, but univocal. In neither type of analogy do we find one common concept which is intrinsically analogical; in both analogies the character signified by the name is said to be *formally* present in only one analogate and merely denominatively or improperly in the other analogate. When we call a cunning person a fox, the term 'fox' is evidently univocal in itself and neither directly nor indirectly signify the character of man; the term is here 'merely given an analogical reference by the mind.

On the other hand, analogy of metaphor is said to differ from analogy of attribution and greatly approximates to the third kind of analogy in that it is based on some *real* likeness and has an internal constitution of proportionality, though an improper and imperfect one. Unlike attribution, which, as we have just seen, merely affirms the existence of some extrinsic relation, metaphor is based on the intuition of a similitude *really* characteristic of the thing to which the term is metaphorically applied. In Anderson's words, 'while there is no health *in* climate, there *is* "something leonine" in Achilles.' Furthermore, it is particularly emphasized by the scholastics that this *real* likeness on which metaphor is based is in the order of efficient causality and is, therefore, essentially *dynamic*

in nature. The likeness, in other words, affirmed by metaphor is in the order of effects produced; instead of reaching down directly to the very essence of the thing, it reveals its mode of action and operation. When a man is called a fox, the metaphor is simply an abridgment of the analogy: the actions done by the man affects our mind or impresses us in the same way as the actions of a real fox would. And in this sense metaphor is considered more intrinsic than simple attribution and is said to strike deeper, because operation is clearly 'closer to essence' than extrinsic relation (cf. Anderson, *op . cit.* ch. XIV).

It is perhaps out of place here to attempt to critisize from our point of view the mode of thinking peculiar to the scholastic ontology, nor does it seem necessary to pursue any longer the Thomist theory of metaphorical analogy. The point of specific relevance for our present purpose lies in the fact that a theory approaching our problem from an entirely different angle from that of the linguist has likewise come to recoginize the existence of the original intuition of a *real* likeness underlying the constitution and use of metaphor, and that, moreover, it has laid a special stress on the *dynamic* nature of metaphorical analogy—a point which has been ignored by the professional students of linguistic meaning. The recognition that metaphor belongs properly to the order of action and operation is, I think, essential to an adequate phenomenological analysis of the metaphorical evocation. For it is, presumably, this very dynamic character of metaphor that makes it so powerful and evocative. If, as has been pointed out earlier, every name-word as such carries in itself a vital, intuitive meaning, and is by itself capable of conjuring up reality in all its original freshness and force, it is precisely at the point of metaphorical tranfer that the intuitive content of a word is brought most clearly to light. Put into the peculiar atmosphere of dynamic activity, the word, so to speak, begins to glow, and all the lived meaning accumulated in the word is evoked and comes all at once to the surface.

It would be quite at point here to recall the most fundamental fact about language, which is indeed almost a truism in these days, that most of our talking and thinking is carried on in metaphors. Metaphor is not a simple figure of speech, a poetic ornament stuck on to our language to make it beautiful. Our ordinary vocabulary is full of metaphors, ranging from those that are already dead, i. e. that are no more felt as such, through intermediate stages of half-faded ones up to those that are vivid, active and expressive. Metaphor, as a peculiar kind of transference of meaning from a sphere to another, is at the root of natural speech construction; it is as it were the very tissue of linguistic meaning, it *is* language. This said, the final conclusion to be drawn seems to lie close at hand. For here again we are obviously driven to face the same old fact that language is through and through evocation.

Now we may turn to the emotive constituent of connotation. Theoretically we

can and certainly must draw a fairly rigorous distinction between emotive and intuitive meaning, but in actual fact the intuitive and the emotive tend to present themselves almost inextricably bound up together. So much so that many able scholars have altogether overlooked the distinction. Whenever, in effect, the intuitive character of a word manifests itself more or less conspicuously, there inevitably occurs simultaneous evocation of feeling and emotion. This is nothing but a very simple fact which should occasion neither surprise nor perplexity. For, as I have said above, the very expressiveness of intuitive meaning consists in conjuring up a living reality external to the mind, in making us live or relive the real world of experience (of whatever dimension it may be) in its original freshness, vigour and vividness. The sense of reality thus evoked can rarely remain inactive and uninfluential on the affective faculties of our minds; to the extent, namely, that the act of intuitive evocation succeeds, and according to the more or less 'exciting' nature of the living context thus conjured up, feelings and emotions are very likely to be raised in our minds, though of course in enormously varying degrees of intensity. It will be obvious, then, that they do not represent two isolated processes. Speaking in a more general way we might even say that the emotive function of words is largely a consequence of their descriptive function, the word 'descriptive' here being taken in a broad sense containing both reference and intuition. There is, I think, no question that, in so far, at least, as most of our familiar everyday words are concerned, a great part of their emotive meaning comes from their descriptive significatoin. But if, as a matter of fact, the development of attitudes and emotions ensuing some arrangement of words is in most cases vitally dependent upon the descriptive meanings of the words used, yet it manifestly will not do, on this account, to deny the necessity of discriminating—theoretically as well as in practice – between the two sorts of meaning. For in the case of emotive meaning, the primary emphasis is clearly put not on the 'reality' or the objects referred to, but rather on the effects in emotion and attitude produced by such evocation of the reality. That makes a world of difference.

The emotive meaning as an independent function of the linguistic sign is not in fact a discovery of recent date. At as early a date as the earlier eighteenth century, Berkeley wrote in the famous *Introduction* to his *Principles of Human Knowledge* (Section 20) the following very remarkable words: 'Besides, the communicating of ideas marked by words is not the chief and only end of language, as is commonly supposed. There are other ends, as the raising of some passion, the exciting to or deterring from an action, the putting the mind in some particular dispositoin; to which the former is in many cases barely subservient, and sometimes entirely omitted, when these can be obtained without it, as I think doth not unfrequently happen in the familiar use of language. I entreat the reader to reflect with himself, and see if it doth not often happen, either in hearing

or reading a discourse, that the passions of fear, love, hatred, admiraion, and disdain, and the like, arise immediately in his mind upon the perception of certain words, without any ideas coming between. At first, indeed, the words might have occasioned ideas that were fitting to produce those emotions; but, if I mistake not, it will be found that, when language is once grown familiar, the hearing of the sounds or sight of the characters is oft immediately attended with those passions which at first were wont to be produced by the intervention of ideas that are now quite omitted. May we not, for example, be affeced with the promise of a *good thing*, though we have not an idea of what it is?'

It is indeed remarkable that in this paragraph the gist of the so-called emotive use of language is most clearly grasped and given a perfectly concise formulation. Here we see Berkeley, as was his wont, attempting to make his theory as phenomenologically true as possible to the actual processes of speech experience, and in fact he succeeds in describing with a considerable amount of truthfulness the psychological genesis of *purely* emotive language through the gradual weakening of the referential meanings involved. The tenor of his discussion is surprisingly modern. References may indeed well be involved, he argues (rightly to my mind), as previous stages in the raising of emotions and passions, but they are not what really matters, and may finally become quite insignificant and almost useless. There are certainly innumerable occasions when we use words merely to evoke attitudes, and when, moreover, the attitudes and emotions aimed at are evoked without any reference being required to come in. He does not even forget to add that the effects produced by such emotive use of words may and very often do work in a way extraordinarily damaging to the mind. In a tone of biting irony he tries to convince the reader of the fact making use of the famous example of *Aristoteles dixit*. 'For example,' he says, when a schoolman tells me "Aristotle hath said it," all I conceive he means by it is to dispose me to embrace his opinion with the deference and submission which custom has annexed to that name. And this effect may be so instantly produced in the minds of those who are accustomed to resign their judgment to authority of that philosopher, as it is impossible any idea either of his person, writings, or reputation should go before.' This will be enough to make Berkley a real predecessor of the general semanticists of our time. For the method here described of distorting the hearer's view by calling up strong emotions is essentially the same as that which characterizes modern sales talk and political propaganda. Unfortunately, however, he did not feel the need of enlarging any more upon the theme of the emotive power of words, a theme which was to become later a matter of such insistent importance. The section I have just quoted was originally inserted in the *Introduction* as a piece of mere incidental observation, for the chief object he had in mind in writing the whole passage was to show the erroneous nature of the doctrine of abstract ideas. Quite abruptly, he cut short his own discussion by saying, 'But why should I insist on

those things which every one's experience will, I doubt not, plentifully suggest unto him?' In order, however, to grasp the real meaning of those—in themselves quite commonplace—things suggesed by every one's day-to-day experience, and to become clearly conscious of the serious consequences of mistaking an emotive appeal for a piece of factual information, man had to wait two centuries. Today, thanks to the assiduous efforts of semanticists, the problem of the emotional thinking and emotional speaking has come to the foreof current attenion; it is even a very popular subject in both lay and academic circles. Living in an age of the unprecedented expansion of publicity and propaganda with incredibly manifold means of influ encing public opinion, we cannot but become *bon gré mal gré* extremely conscious of the dangers resulting from the abuse of emotionally charged words. It was both natural and timely, therefore, that the general semanticists emphasized the most urgent need of guarding against the 'magical' effects of emotive language.

What is generally known as emotive language has two clearly distinguishable but closely related aspects—expression and influence—according as it concerns the speech habits of the speaker or those of the hearer. Current semantic discussions are largely unanimous in recognizing this distinction; hence the most usual definition of emotive terms as those words which are especially suitable for expressing the speaker's feelings and emotions and for stirring those of the hearer. Viewed primarily from the speaker's standpoint, they are no more than natural, i. e. behaviouristic, symptoms of his subjective states; they are active expressions giving direct vent to the emotions and feelings that have somehow arisen in the mind. In this sense, emotive terms are, as L. Stevenson has pointed out (*Ethics and Language* III, 1—2), akin not to words denoting emotions, but rather to such natural and direct manifestations of the emotions as laughs, groans, shrieks, sighs and the like. The expressive aspect of the emotive terms, important as it is, is in itself largely irrelevant to the topic of the present chapter, and does not therefore require more than passing attention. The problem of emotive words begins to assume an enormous importance for our puapose when we turn to the other side of the matter, and look at the phenomenon of emotive language mainly from the view-point of the emotional or practical effects obtainable by the use of such language.

Now it is a matter of common experience that any expression of strong emotions on the part of the speaker tends to have immediate repercussions on the psychological state of the hearer. When a speaker expresses some of his feelings under appropriate circumstances by means of a set of well-selected strategic words he has every reason to expect that his words will set his feeling at work on the hearer's mind, spurring him perhaps on to some action or attitude. This, it goes without saying, may very naturally and easily be developed further into conscious methods of deceiving others, and, worse still, even into unconscious methods of self-deception. This phase of the problem has been so much dealt with in recent

times by semanticists that further detailed discussion would only be a tedious repetition. But before leaving the present discussion altogether, some passing remarks may perhaps not be amiss concerning a point which might otherwise be misunderstood.

During the past two decades various writers and scholars have repeatedly emphasized the 'magical' nature of emotive language. Indeed, of all the fundamental elements of connotative meaning, none seems more entitled to the appellation of 'magical' than the emotive aspect; and nothing, perhaps, reveals in so glaring a light the deeply magical constitution of human language. Those of us who, in national and international political thinking, in the discussion of some controversial questions in warfare, morals and religion, cannot help feeling an irresistible impulse towords resorting to emotionally toned words, causing theredy a host of irrelevancies and confusing thus all issues beforehand, cannot be in any way said to have completely outgrown the primitive magical mentality. Even in modern cultured circumstances, emotive speakers are, in short, still at bottom speaking magicians. But the most vital question to be raised in this connection is this: Shall we ever cease to talk emotively? Can we really look forward to a time when an impartial and objective investigation of facts will be made possible in any discussion of debatable questions by our remaining cold enough, intelligent enough to keep our thinking and speaking purged of all irrelevant emotions? This is very unlikely to come about. The fact is that we are so enslaved by emotional phraseology that it is practically impossible for us to discuss a controversial matter using only those words which would coldly indicate objective facts.

It is essential to recall at this point the important fact already referred to that the so-called 'emotive terms' do not represent a specific class of words that are by nature *emotive*, i, e. neither more nor less than emotive. Strictly seaking there are no specifically *emotive* terms. Or we might approach the matter the other way round and say that all words are essentially emotive. As I. A. Richards once wrote, there can be no doubt that originally all language was emotive, and most language is still emotive. This simply means that every one of the words we use in thinking and speaking bears the unmistakable stamp of its emotional history. It is not merely those acceptedly 'emotive' terms (such as 'nigger' as against 'negro'; 'jingo' as against 'nationalist') or ethical terms and value words (such as 'good', 'bad', 'beautiful' etc,) that are charged with emotional power. All words, even those that are commonly regarded as 'unemotional', or 'emotionally neutral', are strictly speaking more or less emotive. The so-called emotionally neutral terms are nothing other than a large group of words in which the original power of emctional suggestion has been weakened and reduced to a wholly negligible degree. Words like 'automobile', 'house', 'percentage' and the like are as a matter of fact used mainly for descriptive purposes, and *are* almost purely descriptive; yet there still exist in them emotive potentialities, and they

may be actually so used, whenever there is such need, as to call out emotions in the hearer, and, when aided by strong attendant circumstances, may well serve the purpose of distorting his view of the truth. It has been said that even *logical* terms can be made to work in an emotive way. A slight change in the tone of voice may, as very often happens, ignite the explosive power of emotion and change in a moment the most innocent looking words into highly dangerous weapons. The bearing of this last point on the present work is so extremely intimate that it will be considered in more detail in Chap. XI, when we shall have to deal with the problem of the magical 'framing' of language.

Chapter VIII

THE STRUCTURAL EVOCATION

In the present chapter I propose to consider the last of the constituents of connotation as distinguished above: the structural. To free the following account from all misunderstandings, it seems necessary to give preliminary emphasis to a point of terminology. That is, before we can successfully proceed to detailed discussion, we must by all means come to an agreement as to what is to be understood by the term 'structure'.

In the celebrated Rectorial Address at St. Andrews, J. S. Mill declared *grammar* to be the most elementary part of logic. 'It is', he urged, 'the beginning of the analysis of the thinking process. The principles and rules of grammar are the means by which the forms of language are made to correspond with the universal forms of thought. The distinctions between the various parts of speech, between the cases of nouns, the moods and tenses of verbs, the functions of particles, are distinctions in thought, not merely in words.' The tenor of the passage may be reduced to a seemingly very simple dictum: the forms of language correspond with the forms of thought. Now the argument, put in these terms, must, I think, be recognized as largely true, in the sense namely, that it describes the fundamental fact that the forms of language, or linguistic patterns, are not, as they should be (according to modern logicians), simply the forms in which we put our words together, but are, to a very considerable degree, the forms in which we exercise in actual practice our thinking function. The irredeemable vice of Mill's argument comes from his mistaken and misleading assumption about the forms of grammar that they (especially those of the classical languages, whose 'incomparable superiority over every modern language, and over all languages, dead or living' he firmly believed) do represent the necessary and universal forms of human thought. The error of imagining as *necessary* and *universal* the forms of words and the rules of syntax of any language, be it ever of so regular and complicated a structure as Greek or Latin, has been in recent times so much and so repeatedly insisted upon that it need not receive more than passing attention. Students of linguistics have in recent years become ever more conscious that all forms of language are after all but accidental. The time is long past when we can hope to establish the much-desired 'universal grammar' on the basis of natural language.

It will be illuminating to consider for a little the vehement objection brought against Mill's view by I. A. Richards (in *Interpretation in Teaching*, Chap. Seven-

teen, Grammar and Logic). He takes up Mill's sentence 'the structure of every sentence is a lesson in logic' and rightly remarks that this kind of miscegenation between language and thought has engendered *bastard* logics. He warns us against dealing with ordinary language as though all necessary preparatory work on the structure of thought had already been done. But with this we are all so familiar by now. To-day any competently trained linguist does not ignore the fact that scientific logic and natural language are constantly and perhaps irreconciliably at loggerheads. Many first-rate logicians and semanticists think that what makes traditional Aristotelian logic largely, if not hopelessly, inadequate for modern scientific purposes is that it exploits too much and in too uncritical a way the natural tendencies and habits of language, naively transforming grammatical forms into metaphysical entities. The main contention of Richards must be sought elsewhere. The point he wants to make in particular is that syntax classifies the patterns in which we put our words together, not the forms in which we think. It will be remarked, however, that to use the key term 'form' in this way is also highly misleading. In Richards' terminology, 'I see a tiger' and 'I kick a tiger' are syntactically the same, while the *forms* of thought are extremely different. Contrariwise, 'Socrates is wise' and 'Wisdom belongs to Socrates' are two different word patterns, but the same *form* of thought underlies them both. What dose this mean?

It is certainly erroneous to identify grammar with logic when the two are admittedly so ill adapted to each other; it would be no less erroneous, however, to suppose that there is no organic connection between them, or to leave out of account in attempting a theory of thinking the syntactic peculiarities of a given language as so many 'schemata', forms or ways of determining linguistically the contents of thought. Fr. Mauthner once wrote: If Aristotle had been a speaker of Chinese or some of the American Indian languages the formal logic would have become an entirely different thing, based on a wholly different classification of the categories. Without going so far, we might safely assume that the grammatical and syntactic structure of our mother-tongue is to a very great extent responsible for why we think as we actually do. The logic of our thinking, in other terms, is largely dependent on the accidental articulations of reality and the modes of their relationship as developed by and embedded in our native language. Not only the way we think but the objective reality around us, the way we build up the so-called 'real-world', seems to be very much dependent upon the patterns of language. As Korzybski put it, every language has at its bottom certain metaphysics, which is projected automatically into the surrounding world of reality. We cut 'reality' up along lines laid down by our language and tend to suppose that the resulting segments are the natural, i.e. objective, articulations of the world; we tend to forget thereby the most fundamental fact about our world experience, namely that 'we see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do be-

cause the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation' (Ed. Sapir, *The Status of Linguistics as a Science* Sel. Wr. p. 162), that what we usually call the 'real world' is, partly at least, a very complex and complicated product of our language patterns.

In the light of these considerations it would seem wise not to use the phrase 'the forms of thought' ambiguously, as a synonymous expression for 'thought contents' or 'things referred to', but distinguish sharply between the two, while recognizing, on the other hand, the most intimate and essential nexus that binds them up with each other as inseparable correlates. Thus instead of saying, as Richards does, that 'I see a tiger' and 'I kick a tiger' represent two different *forms* of thought (though syntactically they are the same), we might rather say that they are formally or structurally, the same, although the constitution of the extra-linguistic fact referred to in each case is radically different. In other words, the emphasis should, I think, be laid definitely on the contrast between what Korzydski has called 'the structural assumptions' underlying natural language which behave both as patterns of speech and patterns of thought on the one hand, and the structural characteristics of the extra-linguistic reality on the other. Modern thinkers on linguistic problems are coming more and more to emphasize the importance of realizing the tremendous power the pure 'schemata' of language have on the behavioural and semantic reactions of human beings. The classificatory suggestiveness of word-forms and syntactic patterns of a language seems to create for the speakers of that language a special sort of *meaning*, which has its own rules and ways working over and above those of the lexical meanings of the separate words. This we may call 'structural' meaning. It will be easy to see that here we meet with another confirmation of our main thesis, namely that linguistic meaning is essentially and fundamentally based on mental evocation. It is indeed remarkable to see how the kind of structural evocation here spoken of governs — or does enslave, one might almost say — the mechanism of the human mind in astonishingly diverse ways; it is this, for example, that produces what is often described by general semanticists as prescientific, primitive metaphysics which is said to predispose certain fundamamental features of the world-view of a people; it is this, again, that seems to determine to a very large extent the traditional habits of thought, forcing us to think in a narrowly limited number of ways which happen to be natural to our mother-tongue. (See for example the masterly discussion by Edward Sapir of the category of number and its influence on our mode of thinking, *Culture and Personality*, Sel. Wr. p. 550 ff.)

The existence of some such thing as 'structural meaning' underlying the lexical content of a sentence and operating so to speak as the thread of Ariadne for the understanding of the latter, has recently been brought out clearly by C. C. Fries in his new kind of grammar book *The Structure of English*. What he understands by structural meaning he illustrates by such ingeniously devised Jabberwocky

sentences devoid of all lexical meaning as 'Woggles ugged diggles,' 'A woggle ugged a diggle,' etc. The utterance 'Woggles ugged diggles' is composed of nonsense words, so of course we do not know what it means. Assuming, however, that this is English, he says, we at once become conscious of an important sort of meaning it does present to our minds. The sentence is meaningful in the sense that the sequence of nonsense words itself gives us a certain number of informations about some extra-verbal situation, which are not in any way insignificant: it makes us know, for instance, that *woggle* is a 'thing', that there is in this case more than one of these things, and that they *ugged*, i. e. performed in the past some kind of action, and that the action had some influence on some other 'things' called *diggles*. Fries has defined 'grammar' as a system of the devices that call forth such structural meanings; he has applied this kind of thinking in an uncompromising and thoroughgoing way to a formal analysis of the actual living speech of American people.

We must remember, however, that the recognition of this phenomenon itself is not at all a novelty in the history of linguistic science. Thus as early a writer as Anton Marty based his celebrated theory of inner speech (*innere Sprachform*), at least in part, on the basal intuition of what we may rightly call structural meaning. And in 1907, Karl Bühler, from a set of psychological experiments on verbalized thinking carried out independently of any existent linguistic theory, came to discover what he called 'syntactic schemata' (*syntaktische Schemata*) that were said to be wholly or partly 'vacant' (*leer*). 'When we wish to express some difficult thought,' he argued, 'we choose first an appropriate sentence-form for it; we begin by becoming conscious of the operational plan, and it is this plan which governs in the first place the words used. When we have seen through a complicated sentence, that means that we have gained a knowledge of its grammatical structure, that we have grasped the relations which obtain between the individual parts of the whole structure. ···These and other cases bring out something into full relief which, without being particularly noticeable, always—or almost always —comes in and mediates between thoughts and words,··· something which operates as the direct expression of the grammatical rules living in our own minds.' *Tatsachen und Probleme zu einer Psychologie der Denkvorgänge* quoted by himself in *Sprachtheorie* III, § 16).

Viewed from such a standpoint it will be found that the so-called parts of speech are, on the whole, real distinctions among words based upon real facts of structural meaning, and are therefore not to be rejected as wholly arbitrary and unserviceable as some scholars seem to believe. Structural considerations may easily go too far, as when, for example, some grammarians of the new school (including C. C. Fries himself) have tried to discard altogether the old-accepted grammatical categories, such as noun, adjective, verb and so forth, on the ground that the explantaions of them that are usually given in conventional school grammars are

surprisingly inconsistent and insufficient. It can never reasonably be doubted today that the commonly accepted explanations or 'definitions' of the parts of speech are really in need of serious revision and, in not a few cases even of complete rejection. But this should not be taken as implying that the very notion of the so-called parts of speech is completely at fault. On the contrary, the practice of grammarians as regards the distinctions of word-class has, to my mind, generally been sound and well-grounded. The introduction of a structural view-point will certainly ameliorate the traditional definitions of these grammatical categories. And in fact this has already been attempted by some writers on language.

The main reason why the traditional theory seems so unacceptable to us lies obviously in the fact that it overlooks the tremendous formative power exerted by the felt inner speech-form, which is no other than the power of structural evocation inherent in the very make-up of the meaning of any word. It is indeed stupefying to find that no less an authority than Antoine Meillet could define the noun as an indicator of 'thing' (whether concrete objects or abstract ideas, real things or universals, like *Pierre, table, verdeur, bonté, cheval*), and the verb as an indicator of 'events' or processes' (actions, states, or transitions from one state to another, like *il marche, il dort, il brille, il bleuit*) (*Linguistique historique et linguistique générale*, t. I, p. 175). This mode of formulation is undoubtedly inadequate. The inadequacy comes chiefly from the confusion of structural distinctions with real, i. e. objective, distinctions; it comes, in other words, from the fact that the linguistic structures which are called parts of speech are taken here as if they corresponded directly to the structure of the extra-verbal objective world. True, in this point as well as in many others, linguistic and real distinctions cover each other to a certain extent, but they are not on that account be identified or confused. As Henry Sweet pointed out long ago, substance-words are most naturally nouns, attribute-words adjectives, and phenomenon-words, verbs, but the converse is not always the case: *tree* is a substance-word and also a noun; *flight* is a noun, but it is not a substance-word, it is a phenomenon-word. (cf. *History of Language*, Chap. IV).

It is of utmost importance to remember at this juncture that our natural language is properly made to represent the world as we experience it at the macroscopic level. Now the world seen at this 'normal' level is composed of grossly identified 'things' or 'objects', these 'things' having 'qualities' or 'attributes' inherent therein more or less permanently, acting in diverse ways and constituting 'phenomena' or changing attributes. These three elements of the macroscopic universe are represented in language by what we may call after Sweet 'substance-words,' 'attribute-words', and 'phenomenon-words', respectively. Substance-words are the names of the objects of sense, such as men, animals, plants, pieces of furniture and the like. There is a good psychological reason grounded in the very make-up of our world-experience why the living creatures and material

objects tend to obtrude themselves as permanent, insistent 'things' solid enough to be bearers of various attributes, i. e. as *substantiae*. Their names are natural nouns; they are predestined to become the subjects of predication. In the same way the names of the attributes discerned in these substances and believed (rightly or wrongly) to be more or less permanent, constitute natural adjectives; and the more transitory and fugitive aspects of these objects of sense, that is to say, actions, processes, and events, that are believed to take place in or through them are represented by natural verbs which are phenomenon-words. It will be easy to see that substance-words, attribute-words, and phenomenon-words everywhere tend to develop most naturally into nouns, adjectives and verbs respectively. Theoretically, however, the two sets of categories must be kept strictly apart. The fundamental difference between the two lies in this point: in the latter set we meet already with what I have described above as structural evocation working definitely as a formative principle, as, that is to say, a manifestation of the *geistige Gestaltungsksaft* of language, whose importance L. Weisgerber as a disciple of Humboldt has recently so much emphasized in his works.

The grammatical category of 'noun' may very well have originated in substance-words. And it is, needlees to say, of the very nature of all substance-words to reflect rather passively and, as it were, docilely the real objects of sense which obtrude themselves as specifically substantival. Once raised to the status of 'nouns', however, they are no more passive mirrors of the world as apprehended by sense-perception; in other words, nouns, when grammatically effective, are more than mere names of things. The noun as a grammatical category once established, it begins to work in its own specific way regardless of how the real, i. e. extra-verbal, universe is structured, and the active strutural force it exercises does even positively produce innumerable 'objects' and 'things' having no counterparts in the outer world. Thus it becomes possible to make any qualities, actions, and events behave *linguistically* on exactly the same footing as real things; hence the most natural emergence of abstracts and verbal nouns; hence, again, the birth of a countless number of pseudo-things or pseudo-*substantiae* that go on peopling our world which is already crammed with things and objects. (cf. Léon Brunschvicg, *Les âges de l'Intelligence* p. 62)

There is a celebrated passage in the *Catgoriae*, in which Aristotle (or whoever its author is) states that the constituent parts of substances — e.g. head, hands or feet as constituents of an individual body — are not, for the reason of being 'parts' of something, to be denied the appellation of *protē ousiā* or 'primary substances' (*Cat.* 3 a 29-32). This simply means that any parts of any individual thing which happen to be sufficiently prominent and conspicuous for the human mind and which, in particular, happen to be in possession of specific names to designate them, can (or even must) be considered as so many individual things. Thus our body which is no doubt a substance, is made to be composed of many individual substances, such as

head, face, forehead, brow, eyes, ears, neck, shoulders etc., etc. In exactly the same way such outside 'things' as *mountain, peak, valley, top, bottom, tip, branch, bough,* and the like, come to being, owing their 'thingness' to this process of hypostatization of prominent portions of things. This mode of thinking is evidently the first definite step towards bringning pseudo-entities into existence.

The next step will be to represent natural events or processes as 'things': *light, flash, fire, flame, wave, rain, wind, storm,* etc. to mention some random examples. It must be noted that this process of reification is greatly helped by the very natural tendency common to many languages (and which is particularly prominent in the languages of the Indo-European and Semitic families) to express whatever becomes the subject of a verb in the form of a 'noun'. And this gives birth to a very common sort of verbal superstition that to any word standing as the grammatical subject of a proposition or as the grammatical object of a verb, there exists, if not in the empirical world, at least somewhere in a mysterious non-empirical world, a real entity corresponding. (cf A. Ayer, op. cit, Chap. I) As L. Bloomfield pointed out; *fire*, according to physicists, is not a thing but rather an action or process, and is therefore more appropriately to be described by the verb *burn* than the noun *fire* (*Language*, Ch. 16, 2). But no sooner have we begun to say, for example, 'the fire burns and gives out light and heat', than we fall into the danger of reading into nature bogus entities capable of performing miraculous actions: thus in the case here envisaged a self-subsistent entity *fire* becomes postulated and is made to perform some kind of action called *burning* and to produce, furthermore, other substances named *light* and *heat.* Western people who would gently smile at the too naively tautological nature of a Turkish phrase "yağmur yağıyor" (lit. 'rain rains' for 'it rains,') or "kar yağıyor" (lit. 'snow rains' for 'it snows') "dolu yağıyor" (lit. 'hail rains') —— let it be remarked by the way that examples of exactly the same type of expression are met with in Ancient Chinese, too; thus in Tso Chuan 左傳: "Ta yü hsüeh" 大雨雪 'greatly rained snow' (Duke Yin, 9, etc.), "Ch'iu ta yü pao" 秋大雨雹 'autumn, greatly rained hail' (Duke Hsi), or even "Yü chung yü Sung" 雨螽于宋 'rained locusts in Sung,' meaning that a swarm of locusts fell like rain in the country of Sung——those people, I say, very rarely notice the fact that they are doing no better when they say for instance 'the wind blows' or 'the light flashed'. In the language of Stuart Chase, the better physicist in such a case would be the child or, perhaps, even a Hopi Indian, who can boldly express the whole dynamic process by means of the so-called one-word sentence — 'flash!' — which is neither a verb nor a noun, neither subject nor predicate, but rather all of them at one and the same time (cf. *Power of Words* Chap. 10). Only this lasl remark of Chase on Hopi Indian language (which is doutbless largely based on the account of the fact offered by Benjamin Whorf), sounds rather suspiciously like special pleading. The truth seems to be rather that the language of Hopi Indians, as most American

Indian languages, belongs properly to the group of languages characterized by the preponderance of the verbal type of expression. We must remember that among 'primitive' languages there are some which have not yet succeeded in raising themselves even to the stage of the differentiation of nominal and verbal expession, which consequently seem to remain content with a set of entirely amorphous forms. Just above this most primitive stage of formlessness and indeterminacy stand those languages which, though still sticking in a large measure to the 'original indifference of noun and verb' as Cassirer has called it, already show a marked predilection for this or that aspect of the undifferentiated form. Theoretically this gives birth to two basic types of language structure: the nominal and the verbal, though of course the distinction between the two cannot in point of fact a hard and fast one. The nominal languages are largely dominated by the category of the substantive, as expression of the static object; here not only all attributes and relations are made to be essentially dependent upon it, but even those occurrences and actions which are most manifestly of a dynamic nature are very often drawn into the static substantival form. In the verbal languages, on the contrary, everything turns round the category of verb, as the dynamic centre of all expression; indeed nothing, it seems, can remain here wholly static, even 'things' and their objective relations and attributes tend to be transposed into the verbal form, or at least tend to be significantly enmeshed with the dynamic structure of the whole and thereby assume a strongly verbal character. (cf. Ernst Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, I, Kap. III, 4, 3). From this it would at once be evident that nouns are not solely to be blamed for bringing in bogus entities; for if the nominal languages are liable to produce pseudo-things indefinitely, the verbal idioms are no less apt to generate pseudo-activities. In either case then, whether Hopi Indian or Indo-European, what is linguistically expressed is not the objective structure of reality itself but the result of the subjective operation by which the human mind elaborates the given chaos of sensory impressions into an object or activity. But of this more will be said later.

In the above-cited passage, Stuart Chase insists (rightly to my mind) on the necessity of realizing what enormous power the 'subject-predicate' form of proposition has over our ways of interpreting the world. The common sense of the practical man does not admit *pure action* without a subject; if the experience of 'flash!' is to occur at all as a real event, there must be something, some entity, to perform that action; this brings in at once the pseudo-entity *light*, which modern science tells us is not a thing existing in any way in the outer world independently of us and our senses, and this pseudo-thing is made to act as the 'subject' of *flash*, both in ontological and grammatical senses of the word. 'Aristotelian logic,' writes Louis Rougier, 'leads towards introducing a great number of hypothetical substances, of fictitious material mediums, as for example *éther* 'ether' to serve as the subject of the verb *onduler* 'undulate', in spite of the fact that,

under this view, one would be compelled to bestow on this substratum a lot of contradictory physical properties, which are, moreover, quite incompatible with the negative result of experiments made with a view to proving their absolute movement in reference to a medium at rest' (*Pseudo-problèmes résolus et soulevés par la logique d'Aristote* in Actes d. C. I. d. Phil. Scien. 1935, III). It is deplorable that the general semanticists — and some logical empiricists, too, who have attempted to subject natural language to a critical scrutiny — seem to assume that the subject-predicate form of logic is one of the most salient characteristics of *Indo-European* way of thinking, that it *is*, in short, the logic of Western thought. The metaphysics of Aristotle springing from this type of propositional structure is, according to their view, neither more nor less than 'the spontaneous metaphysics of Indo-European languages, and in particular of the Greek language' (L. Rougier), and not, as Bergson held, the spontanecus metaphysics of the human mind. We often hear semanticists argue in a very confident manner that in Chinese for instance the subject-predicate form of sentence is not a normal one, and yet (they add) this language has proved itself capable of giving expression to marvellously intellectual and highly abstract speculations. This is not only erroneous but very misleading. The picture of the 'normal' structure of Chinese sentence given by Stuart Chase — who follows here a Chinese wrietr — in the above-quoted book (pp. 104 — 106) is not at all fair to the grammatical facts of Chinese. For even in Ancient Chinese the normal pattern of declarative statements was of the subject-predicate variety. The detailed consideration of this point belongs, however, to another place than the present study. For the moment we might be content with saying simply that the subject-predicate structure, far from being a peculiarity of Western thought, seems to be normal and universal wherever the human mind has attained a certain level of logical thinking as far, at least, as it is carried on by means of verbal symbols.

In an illuminating paper written in 1876, *Words, Logic and Grammar*, (in Coll. Pap.) praised by I. A. Richards even as having marked the beginning of a new epoch for linguistic studies, Henry Sweet pointed out the danger of regarding an adjective like *white* as 'concrete' and an abstract noun — the very name, be it noted, is significant enough—like *whiteness* as 'abstract'. The truth is, he rightly argued, that *white* is as much an abstract as *whiteness* is, and both are absolutely identical in meaning. In his view, '*Whiteness* is an attribute of snow' has identically the same meaning as 'Snow is *white*', and '*white* snow', the difference between the two being chiefly grammatical: we change, that is to say, *white* into *whiteness* simply as a formal device enabling us to make an attribute-word the subject of a proposition, to talk about an attribute without direct reference to the possessor of that attribute. Such a formal device, however useful it may seem for practical purposes, tends from the very nature of the case to produce the hallucination of 'abstract things' existing quite apart from individual things. That *white* is an adjective

makes us feel as if it were an objective real quality inherent in real things; that *whiteness* is grammatically an abstract noun, on the contrary, gives us the false impression of its being independent of its possessors, something self-subsistent, or even being some entity of a higer order .This of course is not liable to occur in a language like Classical Chinese, which has practically no formal criteria to mark off various word-classes from each other; in Chinese 'white' is 白 "pai, *b'ak" regardless of whether it is used attributively or predicatively, or again as the subject of a proposition. In such a phrase as "shêng pu ju ssû" (lit. 'liv(-ing) not equal to dy(-ing)' i. e. 'Death is better then life') we cannot decide whether life and death are represented as 'things' (life, death). or as 'qualities' (living, dead), or finally as 'events' or 'actions' (to live, to die). This, however, does not prevent Classical Chinese from falling into the danger of hypostatizing. Chinese, in spite of the absence of the external markers for various word-classes is no less full of pseudo-things than any other known language.

We have seen how substance-words, developing into genuine grammatical nouns, come to acquire a peculiar sort of structural potentiality, and how this latter tends to produce in our minds a limitless number of pseudo-substances. Now similar considerations apply, *mutatis mutandis*, also to attribute-words and phenomenon-words as they transform themselves into adjectives and verbs respectively. The point was well brought out by Allan Gardiner when he stated that instead of considering the so-called parts of speech as real distinctions based on the nature of the objects which words refer to, we should rather regard them as various modes of linguistic presentation of things. Thus the grammatical category of 'noun' presents anything *as* a thing, while 'verb' presents anything whatsoever *as* an action or event. In the denominative verb to *cage*, he argues, reference is made to the thing (a cage), but it is presented not as a thing but as an action; in the noun *assassination* reference is made to an action, but the action is presented not as an action but as a thing. (*Speech and Language* § 4, cf. also § 41). To this we might add that the adjective, as another primordial and indispensable part of speech, presents anything as a quality or property possessed by some substance or substances. Thus in English the verb *to heat*, the noun *heat*, and the adjective *hot* belong to three different parts of speech but all express one and the same physical event ; the first, namely, describes the event as an action, the second as a substance, while the last presents it as a quality residing in a substance and characterizing it temporarily or permanently.

The point I am making will best be brought out by a consideration of such ordinary phrases as 'a hard student,' 'a heavy drinker'. We may remark that adjectives are in most cases (logistically speaking) independent functions on a par with nouns and verbs, so that a proposition like 'X is a red building', for example, may be analysed as a logical conjunction of two propositions: 'X is a building' and 'X is red'. But this does not hold with those propositions whose predicates

are of the type just mentioned. For we cannot evidently analyse the proposition 'X (e. g. John) is a slow driver' into 'X is a driver and X is slow'; this we cannot do because here the adjective 'slow' operates not as a general characterizer of X, but exclusively as a modifier of the verb 'drive' contained in the noun 'driver' (cf. H. Reichenbach. *Elements of Symbolic Logic* § 53). In other words, the adjective 'slow' does not describe X in general, the sentence being completely equivalent to 'X drives slowly' with an addition of the idea of an extended tense 'always'. Linguistically, however, (since English does not permit such a construction as 'X is a *slowly* driver', which would, as Reichenbach points out, be most logical) what is really a manner of action is presented as a constant quality of the performer of the action.

That grammatical similarity might (or rather, very often does) conceal factual or logical dissimilarity has been made evident by the problem of 'ethical terms' already alluded to, which has recently come to engage the most vivid and most controversial interests of Empiricist philosophers. Their analysis of value qualities, whatever one may say against it, has at least the great merit of having brought to light the important difference that exists between ordinary adjectives standing for the so-called primary and secondary qualities of things such as *white* or *cold* on the one hand, and on the other those adjectives which represent value qualities such as *good, bad, graceful, beautiful* and *ugly*; it has succeeded in showing that the latter indicate not so much objective properties or qualities of things as the speaker's own emotional reactions towards them. Man has long been a victim to the illusion that the things and actions described by any of the adjectives belonging to this class possessed those properties really and objectively, ignoring thereby that these adjectives have properly much more to do with the expression of man's own emotions and feelings than with pure outside fact. But if this strange thing has been possible it is simply because the adjective as a form-class has a special kind of structural meaning which may generate a host of pseudo-qualities even where in reality there is no objectively discernible quality.

In view of these considerations, Ernst Leisi in the above-quoted book (II, A), has very aptly introduced the notion of 'hypostatization through the word' *Hypostasierung durch das Wort* as the guiding principle of the semantic study of words. Starting from the fact that the single word *triangle* and the combination *three-sided rectilinear figure* have exactly the same meaning—i. e. the same denotation, in our terminology—he argues that the difference between the two expressions consists in the difference of Anschauung—i. e. connotation—suggested by them; 'triangle' describes the thing as a substance represented without accidents, that is, as a member of the class of triangles, whereas 'three-sided rectilinear figure' presents the same thing as a substance (figure) with two individual characteristics (three-sided, rectilinear). When, speaking more generally, anything is described by a single word, the thing, whatever its denotative nature may be,

is apt to be represented as an actualization without accidents of a 'thing in itself' (akzidentienfreie Realisation eines "Dinges an sich"), whereas the same thing, described by a complex of words such as 'three-sided rectilinear figure' can hardly produce the representation of a simple *thing in itself*, but is very commonly represented as a complex of properties standing outside the *thing in itself*. 'Mythology, scholastic realism, and Platonic idealism, these are all grandiose examples of the tendency shared by all speech-communities towards objectifying (or even personifying) any phenomenon whatsoever, in so far as it can be designated by a single word, and endowing it with an independent existence cut off from all other phenomena, i. e. towards exalting it to the position of a substance without accidents.' This process of hypostatization is seen to be active in other categories than the noun; thus in an exactly similar manner the adjective tends to represent anything as an independent, free 'quality', and the verb as an independent, free 'action'.

It will be of no small relevance here to note that, quite independently of these modern theories of grammar and syntax in the West, an extensive inquiry into the grammatical constitution of his mother tongue has led a Japanese philologist to astonishingly similar conclusions concerning the structural characteristics of the parts of speech. I mean Yoshio Yamada, 山田孝雄 who, ever since he wrote his celebrated *Nihon Bumpō Ron* 日本文法論 (Treatise on Japanese Grammar) in 1908, has repeatedly insisted on the necessity of approaching the problem of the parts of speech from a mentalistic point of view. Against those who hold, for instance, that adjectives are a class of words standing for all sorts of qualities, while verbs are words standing for actions or states, he rightly points out that such a theory can never satisfactorily account for the existence of a host of adjectives—e. g. "sabishi" (lonely) — which describe states rather than qualities. Nor can we emend it, he argues, by saying that the verb represents an action, and the adjective a state; for in that case the existence of many verbs—e. g. "niru" (to resemble) — whose meaning approximates to 'state' rather than to 'actions', must remain unaccounted for. Besides, we have in Japanese innumerable pairs of words derived from one and the same stem, of which one member is an adjective and the other a verb, e. g.

"takashi" high ····· "takamu" highten ·····
"yowashi" weak ····· "yowamu" weaken ····· "yowaru" become weak
"nibushi" dull ····· "niburu" become dull
"shiroshi" white ····· "shiromu" become white or whitish ·····
"kurushi" painful ····· "kurushimu" get pained ·····
"sawagashi" noisy ····· "sawagu" make a noise ·····
"nagekawashi" deplorable ····· "nageku" deplore ·····
"urameshi" rancorous ····· "uramu" have a rancour ·····
etc., etc.

'No one would doubt', he argues, 'that in "kokoro hanahada tanoshi" ([My] heart [is] very happy) the word "tanoshi" is grammatically an adjective, whereas in "Kokoro hanahada tanoshimu" ([My] heart very-much *happies*, as it were) the word "tanoshimu" will never be mistaken for an adjective; everybody will recognize its being a verb. And yet it should be remarked that the idea underlying these two words refers exactly to one and the same state of mind. .....' From this he concludes that the discrimination of the parts of speech must be based 'not on the nature of the objective phenomenal world itself, but on how the objective phenomena, whether things, qualities, actions, or states, are represented in our minds'; in other words, on how 'our language presents them to our minds.' Thus in the present case, for instance, 'when anything is presented or represented as of a permanently fixed or subsistent character, it becomes an adjective', but that same attribute may very well be pictured in mind also as of a changing, temporary, and fleeting nature, in which case it is a verb.' (Yoshio Yamada, *Nihon Bumpōgaku Gairon* 日本文法学概論 'Principles of the Science of Japanese Grammar', 1936, Chap. X).

It will be easy to see that this sort of structural consideration may rightly be extended from the parts of speech to the wider sphere of syntax in general. In fact, every name-word, as we have just observed, has a grammatical status, which makes it behave more or less independently of the factual state of affairs to which it refers. Now if such be the case, it would be quite natural for us to conclude that syntax—which is in effect nothing more than the ways we put our words together —is possessed of a peculiar sort of structural power, which tends to work in its own way irrespective of how the form of the facts to be denoted is objectively structured. Take for instance the much discussed 'subject' — 'object' sentence pattern; we may, for the convenience of explanation, illustrate it by the following four examples: (1) 'I kill a spider', (2) 'I fear a spider', (3) 'I see the moon' (4) 'I dig a hole'. These sentences, when looked at from the syntactic viewpoint are exactly the same; they all suggest that a substance (here a person) represented by the 'subject' performs some action expressed by the verb, and that action influences in a certain positive way another substance expressed by the 'object'. Notwithstanding this apparent uniformity, however, the states of affairs these sentences stand for are widely different; they are not saying at all the same sort of thing. For when I kill a spider I actually do something to it, but when I fear it, or when I see it, it is not the spider but rather I myself who am directly affected; when, further, I dig a hole, I can in the very nature of the case do nothing to the object called 'hole' for this is after all a 'privative' noun and does not stand for anything positive. And yet these important factual differences are disguised by the complete similarity of syntactical form which has its own structural meaning : 'the subject' is the performer of an action, the 'object' the undergoer of that action (cf. Fries, *op. cit.* IX).

Reference has repeatedly made to the 'subject-predicate' sentence-pattern: structurally, this type of expression means that there is some substance denoted by the subject-word and that this substance has a quality or property which happens to be denoted by the predicate. Thus we say, 'The tree is green', for example. We may profitably remember here Fr. Mauthner's celebrated words that if we wanted to be true to reality, we should rather say, instead, 'The tree greens me.' But 'the tree greens me', though irreproachable in thought, is (at least in English) impossible syntax. We can say, 'The sun warms me', but we cannot say, 'The sky blues me', and we are compelled to say, 'The sky is blue', transforming thereby the two experiences of a very similar character into extremely different types of thought (cf. I. A. Richards, *op. cit.* Ch. XVI). Examples might be multiplied indefinitely, but enough has been said, I believe, to show that there are everywhere traps in ordinary discourse for those who assume that grammatical forms give clues to the logical or objective form of the facts they want to express.

'I see nobody on the road,' said Alice.

'I only wish *I* had such eyes' the king remarked in a fretful tone. 'To be able to see Nobody! And at that distance too!'

(*Through the Looking Glass*)

Indeed, from the structural point of view, 'Nobody came' stands, as A. G. N. Flew has remarked (*Essays on Logic and Language* I, Introduction), exactly on the same footing as 'Somebody came'. And this similarity of formal meanings may mislead people quite unconsciously to a certain feeling, if not to an explicit belief or thought as in the case of the King of Lewis Carroll, of 'nobody' being (in a very queer way, to be sure,) a certain kind of person capable of performing some action just as 'somebody' is. That this, though apparently absurd, has very often actually occurred with eminent philosophers, Gilbert Ryle has shown in a paper entitled *Systematically Misleading Expressions* (now reproduced in the collection of essays on *Logic and Language* just referred to, Ch. II); he has chosen three main types of expression that are especially liable to engender philosophical misconstructions in looking grammatically like denoting expressions which in fact they are not, and called them 'systematically misleading'. It will, however, be necessary to remember in this connection that all expressions are after all more or less misleading; there is no *completely* non-misleading type of expression in any language; the structural overmeanings of words have their own independent laws of working, and in this sense our language does not and can not picture reality. But this is not the place to go into all the issues raised by this problem, though they are evidently of profound importance for the general theory of linguistic meaning; for that would take us too far afield for the purpose of this little book. I have, I think, given enough instances to show in what sense the semantic resources of our language may and must be viewed as essentially based on mental evocation; in what sense, therefore, the terms 'magic' and 'magical' must be

understood when applied to the behaviour of words and expressions at the most fundamental level of the semantic constitution of ordinary language. 'Evocation' or 'suggestion' of course does not necessarily spell 'magic', but the relationship existing between the two is of the most intimate kind, and the transition from the former to the latter is among the easiest and most natural things to happen. This acceded to, there immediately arise some consequential problems concerning the origin of linguistic *symbols* (as opposed to mere *signs*), to which we shall turn in the following sections.

Chapter IX

SPONTANEOUS RITUAL AND THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE

The main lesson to be drawn from the preceding chapter is that language seems to have, in its very semantic constitution, a certain fundamental magical predisposition, which may very easily be developed and directed to serve the ends of genuine magic. Furthermore, we could even make out a case for the supposition that this 'predisposition' is in reality not so much an as yet unrealized possibility as an enfeebled survival from an early age in the history of language formation, when language as such was somehow coloured by magic.

In fact, all our thinking seems to have led us more and more to this view, that magic, far from being something extraneous to language, is an essential, vital component of linguistic meaning, that, in short, magic lies at the very root of all language behaviour. It would appear that the spirit of magic, clinging tenaciously to all the phases of our language, has completely permeated it. But no sooner have we accredited this theory than we find ourselves confronted with another serious question as to the historical source of all this. Thus we are led almost inevitably to the most formidable task of finding some explanation of the mutual relations of language and magic, and this, again, leads us to the problem of the genesis of language itself. For the discussion of the fundamental nature of language stands in the last analysis inseparably connected with that of the ulitimate secret of linguistic origins.

Now if the view which I have put forward tentatively is correct, if, in other words, magic has interpenetrated with the meaning function of the word so completely that we seem entitled in a certain sense to speak straightforwardly of the magical character of language, it would follow from it that there must have been a time in the history of humanity when language as a whole was deeply immersed in magical spirit.

I need, I think, spend little time insisting that the quest of linguistic origins, fascinating and absorbing as it is, is almost bound to be a failure. Since the latter half of the last century when metaphysical speculations were particularly rife concerning the beginnings of human language, various hypotheses have been advanced, but almost all of them belong not so much to the domain of linguistic theory as to the realm of sheer fantasy. The truth is that we entirely lack the means of carrying back the history of language beyond the limit of five thousand years at most, but this is of course a mere nothing in terms of anthropological

time. Nor are the languages of the present-day primitive races to be utilized as materials directly illustrating the linguistic conditions of primeval man, for they have undoubtedly many centuries of evolution behind them. In such a condition of affairs, it would seem wisest not to attempt, even in the most tentative and hypothetical way of thinking, to surprise the secret of the genesis of language; the best policy will be to remain content with suggesting that the experience of linguistic meaning has probably much to do with magic which is an *Urerlebnis* of man. And this is, as we saw, precisely what Walter Porzig has done in *Das Wunder der Sprache*. In the above-quoted passage from that book there stand the following highly significant words: 'To mean something by means of speech is nothing less than a weakened form of magical binding'; but he has not attempted to develop this line of thought very far, thus wisely avoiding to draw himself and his readers into great perplexities. And yet, in spite of all this, there are, among students of language as well as among scholars concerned with the essential constitution of the human mind in general, increasing signs of a revival of interest in the problem of linguistic origins. And no wonder; for anyone who would grapple seriously with the fundamental problem of the human nature can hardly dispense with some working hypothesis regarding the emergence of language even though it is bound to be no more than an in greater or lesser degree plausible conjecture based upon as good as no empirical evidence. It seems, moreover, not at all improbable that we can make our hypothesis much more defensible if we, instead of confining ourselves to the plane of the purely linguistic, adopt some wider perspective and look upon the whole problem, as E. Cassirer has done for example, as a particular case of a much broader one of the possible origin of symbolic behaviour in general.

Since, then, all quest of linguistic origins is bound to remain largely in the realm of conjecture, everybody is in principle free to adopt any theory he likes provided only that it be such that in the light of it ceratin relevant facts appear to fit together better than they do on any other supposition. So for the purpose of contrasting, I propose to examine at first the position which is precisely antipodal to the one I am going to defend. I mean the standpoint of those who are strongly of opinion that the birth of language is wholly pre-magical. We may cite as an illustrious example the conception of Karl Bühler. His position may be described in a very succinct way by the dictum which he cites: *primum vivere deinde philosophari*, and which he believes to hold ontogenetically as well as phylogenetically. He argues that both in nursery and in primeval woods the way the first name-words are born can only be wholly pre-magical (*vor-magisch*). 'The child whom we can observe,' he writes, 'acquires his earliest stock of name-words *before* any speculative magical attitude begins to exert an active influence. And even when the magical attitude has actually come into being, it does not in

any way permeate and saturate all the life-situations of the child with its spirit, but always leaves another line of development entirely free.' Against Lévy-Bruhl and his followers among ethnographical sociologists and J. Piaget among child-psychologists. his conception emphasizes the existence of the *völlig magie-freie Experimentierhaltung*, which does play a decisive role in the early phases of language formation. To insert a hypothetical stage of *magische Denkweise* in the earliest course of human history and to attempt to view everything from such a perspective is, according to Bühler, to commit the age-old error of *proteron hysteron*. 'The man who is just in process of development speculates, on the whole, not *before* but *after* creating something; thus in the case here envisaged, he speculates on the names of things only when they are there before his eyes.' (*Sprachtheorie* III, 14, 1).

It is to be remarked, to begin with, that for Bühler the magical attitude of life does not constitute part of *vivere*, but belongs rather to the domain of otiose *philosophari*; it is essentially speculation, 'afterthought' in the literal sense of the word. The fact of the matter is that, in raising his objection against those who believe the existence of an intimate organic connection between language and magic and their joint development, he is thinking obviously of such extravagant superstitious conceptions of language as I attempted to describe in the second and third chapters of this book, to which certainly his remarks apply with admirable exactitude. It would indeed be a case of downright *proteron hysteron* if we imagined that the humanoid creature who hit upon the happy idea of creating the first name-words, must have been already in full possession of formally standardized magical practices and an exuberant growth of superstitious beliefs concerning the things of the surrounding world of reality. We know, on archeological and anthropological evidence, these to have developed among mankind only gradually and slowly. But manifestly it will not do, on that account, to negate the important part played by the magical tendency of man in the process of language formation. It must be borne in mind that magic, as understood in the deeper and more dynamic sense of an inalienable propensity of the human mind for symbolization, begins to work far below the level of standardized magic; it is precisely this symbol-making tendency common to all human beings that constitutes the real fountainhead of all magical practices and beliefs. Magic thus understood stands undoubtedly first and foremost among the vital concerns of primitive man; it is not *philosophari*, it is his *vivere*, not an idle mental pursuit, but a vital ingredient of his pragmatic relation to the environment, the mysterious and indispensable pivot of his life which determines the main lines of his attitude towards reality. It is magic in this sense that we must take into account in seeking to unravel the mystery of the basic act of Meaning.

The possibility of constructing a very coherent theory of linguistic origins without taking into account the magical dispositions of the human mind has more recently been shown by another noted psychologist, G. Révész. I have already

alluded to his work on the origin and prehistory of language, *Ursprung und Vorgeschichte der Sprache*, in which the author, without deliberately and explicitly opposing, to be sure, the view of those scholars who attach central importance to the magical contexts of language, has nonetheless completely discarded the notion of magic even as a subsidiary factor of language formation. Put in a nutshell, his is a theory of three stages—cry (*Zuruf*), call (*Anruf*), word (*Wort*)—based on a still more comprehensive and fundamental theory of 'contact' (*Kontakttheorie*). According to his creed, the innate need of 'contact' (purely physical at the lowest stage of animal life, but afterwards becoming more and more mental and psychological) constitutes the basis and the necessary condition of all development and differentiation of various social forms of animals. This basic need of coming into closer contact with each other holds sway over the whole domain of their existence and determines the process of the evolution of diverse means of communication, of which human language is but one, although of course the latest and most remarkable, instance. With the emergence of *Zuruf*, the pre-verbal inarticulate cry addressed to a more or less definite group, such as the warning-cry of certain species of animal, the first decisive stage of evolution has been attained; the stage, namely, which marks the real beginning of the prehistory of language, for the cry as here to be understood is evidently the most primitive from of communcation. Next comes the stage of *Anruf*, the call addressed, this time not to all the members of the group as a whole and indiscriminately, but to some determinate individual member of the group, with a view to demanding of the latter the satisfaction of a desire. Another characteristic feature of this type of communication is that the utterer of the sign, whether animal or man, usually gives by means of some auxiliaries such as manual gesture, the direction of the eye, and the like, spatial indications and, in some cases, even directly points at the object desired. The 'call' in this sense is already definitely *imperative* in nature.

Now this characteristically imperative function of the sign remaining still largely implicit at the stage of the 'call', becomes entirely explicit with the advent of the next stage, the stage of the 'word', which, moreover, as Révész believes, immediately follows the preceding one without any intermediary forms. Thus, in his opinion, we must insert a specific stage of *Imperativsprache* (imperative-language), in which everything is made to function in the capacity of the imperative, between the last of the stages of linguistic prehistory and the emergence of the 'indicative-language' which is the authentic type of human speech as ordinarily understood. But of this I have already spoken in an earlier context. So without lingering over that, attention must be called to another point of decisive importance. The question now to consider is this: admitting the theoretical hypothesis of Révész to be the most natural one to adopt as regards the earliest stage of human language, are we really entitled to pay no attention to an

extraordinarily mighty formative influence that must have been exerted by magical ideas upon the life of our forefathers living just at that critical moment when the rudiments of linguistic symbolism were definitely dawning in their minds? We must call to mind that the higher apes and certain species of birds have most of the speech organs, and that in the case of birds, in particular, even the tendency to spontaneous babbling, the 'impulse to chatter', is not wanting, which is deemed by modern psychologists to be characteristic of early childhood among human beings. And yet, neither the development of the vocal organs in the anthropoid apes nor the unmistakable existence of a natural interest in sounds in birds has led them to the creation of anything deserving to be called the prototype of articulate language. There is, such a vast gulf between the animal utterance and human speech as to make any theory of natural development almost impossible. We must conclude that the imperative-language as the earliest stage of all human speech cannot have evolved, as Révész has assumed, from the preceding stage of the 'call' by a kind of natural process without any intermediaries. What, then, has caused this deep cleavage between man and brute as regards their means of communication? We can, I think, successfully account for the marvellous fact of the creation of language only by introducing the notion of magical tendency which is highly characteristic of the human mind under primitive conditions.

Let us, by way of a beginning, set forth briefly a peculiar theory of linguistic origins apparently standing in strong contrast to the theories thus far examined. It is the very arresting and suggestive hypothesis put forward by Susanne Langer in her important work on the significance of symbolic behaviour, *Philosophy in a New Key* (Chap. 5) that I have here in mind. Starting from the basal philosophic intuition shared by eminent writers on linguistic theory like Ernst Cassirer and Edward Sapir, she maintains that the most primitive, and conseqently the most original function of human language is not, as so often presumed without careful scrutiny, communication; that language must rather be regarded as primarily a concrete manifestation of 'the tendency to see reality symbolically' (Sapir), of which the communicative aspect is but a secondary and derivative function. 'Language is a very high form of symbolism', and as such it cannot have arisen except in a species in which the liberation from practical affairs was well on the way, and the process of symbolization at least in its lower forms already in full force. This amounts to saying in such a theory like hers, that language could only have originated in communal life with a wealth of flourishing dance-forms, antics, symbolic gestures, and the like; that, in short, ritual is the real cradle of language. Following closely Donovan, who in the late nineteenth century published in *Mind* an essay with a highly significant title, '*The Festal Origin of Human Speech*', Langer argues that festive occasions may probably have served not only

as a general background but even more directly as the very matrix of linguistic symbols. In the midst of festal excitement, the theory runs, when the emotional tension necessary for endowing the voice with a peculiar sort of symbolic value was keyed to the highest pitch, particular syllables may very well have become associated with some particular objects, persons, or actions. And this association once established, it is easily conceivable that the mere sight of the object tended to stimulate people to utter the corresponding syllable or string of syllables even outside the total festive situation that had given it birth. It will be evident that such a semantic nexus formed between the word and the object will continue to be tightened through innumerable acts of the same type ever more securely until the object may be conjured up in the mind of the hearer even in its absence. When this point is reached, the sound may have become a *representative* symbol.

Now this argument, which is as a working hypothesis no less coherent than that of Révész and perhaps even more suggestive, may nevertheless be said to have its own difficulties. Setting aside all peripheral di^{ff}culties, I will point out what seems to me the chief weakness of the Donovan-Langer theory. In brief, it consists in the fact that here again magic is taken largely in the sense of standardized magic, as the very choice of the title '*Festal Origin*' bears witness. And it is doubtless this that gives their whole theory an utterly false appearance of being too fantastic and imaginative a fiction to be relied upon. We see that upon their hypothesis, language is made to originate in the communal festive occasion of dance and song; in other words, the origination of speech is attributed to the very specific state of the minds of the festal players during their great excitement. The voice, we are told, accompanying ritualized, symbolic gestures, would become intimately associated with the central figure of the celebration, human, animal or other, and would tend to preserve this association even after the end of the annual feast.

The broad assertion that the genesis of human language must have needed as its immediate background some such extraordinary emotional tension of the mind as is usually observed on ceremonial occasions may probably be laid down quite correctly. It might seem quite safe to say, furthermore, that there must have been a wealth of symbolic gestures to confer upon the accompanying voice a peculiar kind of expressive and symbolic value, for, otherwise, the fact of the semantic symbolism of the word would remain hardly accounted for. But in spite of all that, it requires a considerable amount of strain on our credulity to believe that language could only be formed in the furnace of festal excitement, that, to wit, it is the product of sanctioned ritual acts. And this will be enough to make us suspect that the account of the matter will need amendment and some further qualification.

For the purpose of making the above theory a much more plausible and usable

hypothesis, I will introduce into it another important notion, namely that of the 'spontaneous magic' once more drawing inspiration from the masterly discussion of the magical processes among primitive people by B. Malinowski. In one of his noteworthy papers, *Magic, Science, and Religion*, he teaches us that, when we want to penetrate to the hidden fountainhead of magical belief and practice, it is essentil anot to confine our attention to the plane of traditionally fixed ritual forms but to go down a step deeper tracing each of them to its ultimate source in a real subjective experience. To put it in a nutshell, Malinowski's main thesis comes to this, that to most types of formalized ritual there corresponds, as a rule, a spontaneous ritual of emotional expression or of a forecast of the wished-for results. The foundations of magical ritual, he insists, are not taken from the air; they must have originated from a number of passionate experiences actually lived through. In the midst of his instinctive and pragmatic life, primitive man comes very often to an impasse where he feels himself lost, forsaken by his knowledge, and his desire thwarted. Such a situation naturally tends to induce a strained state in his nervous system, which again cannot but drive him to some frenzied behaviour as a sort of substitute activity. Thus a thwarted desire takes hold of a man only the more strongly because he feels himself impotent; it becomes easily an obsession, and when the breaking point is reached, the pent-up psycho-physiological tension gushes out in passionate uncontrollable gestures. The spontaneous acts and works—the 'spontaneous ritual' as so aptly named by Malinowski—that are thus engendered as natural responses of man to such a situation are of the most various kinds. The man under the domination of impotent anger, for example, would spontaneously clench his fist and break out into threatening gestures against his enemy; the man dominated by some irresistible desire would very naturally be driven to a mimic representation of the desired end, and so forth.

The point of the greatest relevance to our main subject is that this 'spontaneous ritual' of overflowing passion or desire is haunted by the idea of the object whether desired or feared. As Malinowski emphasizes, even when man loses control over himself entirely, and is driven to the extreme limit of frenzy and wild excitement, there presides over all this outburst of emotion a very clear image of the end. Indeed it is the image of the object of desire, hatred, or fear, that constitutes the very heart and core of this kind of reaction, providing it with a dynamic motive-force and organizing the whole process into what may be really deserving of the name of 'spontaneous ritual.' It will be observed at once that the first primitive form of pantomimic movement here described involves explicitly or implicitly a factor of supreme significance for the progressive development from the animal cry to the specifically human kind of sign behaviour. I mean the pointing gesture as an attenuation, or better, spiritualization of the more original grasping movement, the *demonstrare* which is both physical and mental. We may remark by the way that even in the higher anthropoid apes pointing

movement has not developed beyond the most rudimentary stage. But without this factor of half-mental and half-physical pointing, the 'articulation' which is admittedly the most characteristic feature of human language is entirely inconceivable; without it, language, if language it is, must ever remain in the stage of an as yet undifferentiated vague indication of the whole situation. Just imagine our primitive man under the sway of obsessive desire pointing at a certain definite object and uttering certain sounds at the same time; in the midst of the incessant flux of consciousness something enduring and permanent has for the first time been arrested, and a decisive step towards the development of the naming function has been taken; the first beginnings of objectivization as the necessary condition of all sensory—and eventually conceptual—knowledge are already clearly there.

The indicative gesture in question, besides supplying in this way the nucleus of the semantic association between sound and object, tends most naturally to subserve another important function, namely that of developing a specific class of words whose task it is precisely to 'point' at this or that particular object. It will need no special stressing that the pointing movement as described above, whether physical or mental, would lead directly to the origination of various kinds of demonstrative terms and their gradual multiplication, for they are no more than immediate substitutes of the pointing gesture, which is itself nothing but a symbolic metamorphosis of the grasping or clutching movement of the hand. It is common knowledge to-day that 'demonstratives'—*Zeigwörter* in Bühler's terminology, and 'egocentric particulars' as Russell has called them—form a specific stratum of linguistic signs and, side by side with that of name-words, play the most important role as the very basis of our psycho-physiological mechanism. Thus we see that the general situational context of spontaneous ritual drives men towards generating the two fundamental classes of symbols, name-words and demonstrative words, which are both equally essential for the true characterization of all human speech.

Exception may perhaps be taken to the theory just sketched on the ground that even if the role played by the indicative gesture might be acknowledged as an essential factor of language formation, yet it manifestly will not do to insist in addition that the drama should be enacted against the very particular background of spotaneouce magic. It is an empirical fact that in savage societies all phenomena and things are classified into two strictly separate categories; the natural or famliar, and the supernormal or unaccountable. The primitive has two domains of reality to live in, the domain of the profane and that of the sacred, the world of sober practical activities and the world dominated by superstition, ritualism, and magic. And both would appear to have an equal claim to the honour of having caused the origination of human language. It would seem that the focal point of the whole process lies after all in the occurrence of the pointing gesture, and the context in which it occurs, whether magical or normal, will,

on the face of it, make little or no difference. If such a marvellous efficacy may justifiably be attributed to the deictic movement, why should it be confined to magical contexts? Cannot we reasonably expect the same thing to happen in normal, work-a-day situations? Thus we have come back to the point which we have already encountered in discussing the hypothesis of Révész.

We must duly allow for the fact that, in terms of pure theory, the region of ordinary, commonplace happenings to which neither magic nor religion belongs, may very well have served as the general background of the characteristically human drama of language formation. In so far as we refuse to give our full assent to the theory advanced by Lévy-Bruhl that primitive man is completely immersed in a prelogical superstitious frame of mind, and has therefore no 'physical' world in our sense, in so far as we acknowledge, instead, the duality of the Sacred and the Profane as an empirical fact among all primitive peoples, we are not, it would seem, justified in attributing the creation of linguistic symbols exclusively to only one of these two equally important domains of savage life.

Now it would be vanity for anyone to think of being able to remove all these critical misgivings—and very serious ones at that—with one stroke and in a completely satisfactory way. And yet, on the other hand, it will not be impossible to suggest at least some lines of solution. It will be noticed, to begin with, that the facts of spontaneous ritual do not belong in an exclusive way to either of the two domains as distinguished here, but stand somehow outside this theoretical duality of primitive life; or rather, they hang as it were double-faced in mid-air between the two, partaking of the nature of both the Sacred and the Profane. And this hovering middle position between opposite extremes appears to make them move back and forth between the two perspectives. On the one hand, spontaneous magic, as natural responses of man to overwhelming emotion or excessive desire, is undoubtedly an integral part of his ordinary life, but it implies, on the other hand, the occurrence of some strange gaps and breaches in the practical routine of his everyday affairs; it signifies, in other words, the intrusion of the extraordinary and magical into the middle of the scenes of daily life. Remaining within the limits of the ordinary practical relations of life, spotaneous ritual belongs nonetheless to the domain of magic; this is clear from the above-mentioned fact that it constitutes the real prototype of all standardized forms of magic and ritual. Thus we see that the hypothesis of the magical origin of language does not involve the assumption—which is absurd—that the primitive must be perpetually spook-haunted, nor does it necessarily imply that man could not have created language without stepping out of his daily life and entering into the specifically sacred domain of magic or religion.

Another important point may be noticed. It will be plain from what has preceded that spontaneous ritual, if viewed from the angle of daily life, is nothing more than a symptom of a very high tension induced by some strong emotion in

the psycho-physiological organism of man. The tension once induced, it takes hold of man from inside as a mental and physiological obsession, and does not relax its grip until it spends itself in a outburst of emotion in words and acts. Thus it can now be seen that a strong emotional experience always tends to supply a very favourable situation for a more or less frenzied overflow of words or sounds. And such, presumably, must have been also the case with our distant forefathers just below the level of speech, who, as yet lacking a full-fledged articulate language, could nevertheless communicate no doubt by means of a variety of 'signs', nay, who were most probably already a 'chattering' race with the babbling instinct and the natural interest in the phonetic material which characterize so significantly the earliest period of child language. (cf. J. Piaget, *The Language and Thought of the Child*, Eng. tr. Chap. I, the section on 'echolalia'). We may remark in addition that the high emotional tension usually contributes greatly towards enhancing the gravity or solemnity of the voice uttered, which is evidently the first and necessary condition for the development of the basal association between the sound and the object.

As to the stimulative influence of overflowing emotion or desire on the spontaneous verbiage of man, we may note that some approximation to it is often found even in animals. The vocal behaviour in birds provides an instance in point. It will be remembered that the bird with its very conspicuous natural interest in random sounds of the surroundings, its imitative impulse, and its vocalizing instinct, is as a species a characteristically singing creature, unique in this respect in the whole animal kingdom and rightly comparable to man in his early childhood. So let me bring this lengthy chapter to a close with a few remarks on the voice-play of birds, in so far as it will offer an important side-light upon my immediate theme. The following account is based on an interesting observation made to me in a personal communication by a young ornithologist-linguist, Takao Suzuki, to whom I take this opportunity of acknowledging my indebtedness.

As a first approximation we may divide the 'speech' of birds into two classes: (1) call-notes—the everyday language, so to speak, of birds, which they employ all through the year for ordinary communicative purposes, and which, thus, corresponds, broadly speaking, to the pre-linguistic usage of sound-signs among human beings to which reference has been earlier made; and (2) 'songs' in a narrow sense, which seem to obey certain canons of emotional reaction, inasmuch as they are closely associated with various states of inner effervescence of birds. Of these two it is clearly the latter kind of vocal activity that will have a direct bearing on our main problem; this is therefore deserving of a brief description.

According to T. Kawamura (of Kyōto University) who is of unsurpassed authority on the subject in Japan, three types are to be distinguished among bird songs: *viz.* (1) territory song, (2) love song, and (3) joy song. The first two are

sometimes lumped together under the more general appellation of 'spring song' and in fact they are not always easily distinguishable from each other even in one and the same species. (Tamiji Kawamura 川村多実二, *Tori-no Uta-no Kagaku* 鳥の歌の科学 'Science of Bird Song'.) Joy song—or ecstasy song, as Kawamura sometimes calls it—is a very peculiar type of song which is sung in an exceedingly animated manner when birds are apparently in a state of agreeable excitement. As is well known, birds are extremely sensitive to the conditions in the external environment. When the weather is, for example, bad, they remain silent and retiring, but with the least suggestion of fine weather, they at once become hilarious and buoyant, and break out into sprightly song as if seized with an irresistible desire to give vent to the inner surge of joy. One might say that the suddenly heightened physiological tension must at any cost spend itself in a melodious flow of vocal sounds. This type of song is sung by birds irrespective of age, sex, and season.

Still more interesting and greater of significance for our thesis is the 'spring song' comprising both territory and love song. Whereas joy song is heard in all seasons, this type of vocal activity is tied down to a particular season, the spring. Now it is a commonplace to say that birds begin to sing with the advent of spring. And the physiological explanation of the fact is also ready to hand. With the coming of spring the increasing daylight goes on stimulating the pituitary gland located under the eye and this gradually induces an adequate secretion of hormones in the blood, which is most immediately responsible for the arousal of the sex drive. It will be remarked that, in birds as well as in the higher animals, the period of sexual need is also a period of increased general activity. Sexual drive, it seems, not only gives rise to specific activity towards the satisfaction of the desire, but also stimulates the organism to an increase of bodily activity in general. In the particular case of birds this causes a remarkable vivification of vocal behaviour, making the sexual cycle coincide exactly with the singing cycle.

Thus in the Temperate Zone, where birds generally mate and breed in the spring, we hear them sing rapturous songs from spring to summer; thence the name of 'spring'-song under which this type of their vocal activity is usually known. It is extremely interesting to note in this connection that the domesticated fowl and canary that have no particular sexual cycle have no seasonal cycle for singing either. This abolition of the sexual cycle, or better still, the extension of it to the whole year seems to have caused here the extension of the singing (or crowing) activity to all seasons.

Besides these more or less formalized seasonal songs, another type of singing is often observable during the sexual period, which is of a more intimate nature, being more closely associated with the act of mating itself. Indeed, it is not uncommon among songsters that a peculiar kind of singing forms an integral part

of the pre-coital display usually performed by the male for the purpose of arousing in the female the specific desire for the sexual act. A number of very remarkable cases have been recorded by Len Howard, whose book *Birds as Individuals* is a real mine of information on this and many other subjects concerning the life-habits of birds. Here is a passage, for example, in which she describes the frenzied love-making of a blackbird. Once she heard, she tells us, a very strange song, of an entirely uncommon type, of a blackbird. A hoarse jumbled medley of song, it struck her at first as if coming from some bird going through some kind of torture. She hurried to the spot with ideas of saving it from disaster; she found that 'it was the passionate love-song of a Blackbird in the last throes of wooing a provocative female, who led him a chase, round and round in small circles···· He was more and more excited as the chase grew faster; his neck was stretched out, head-feathers were ruffled, eyes glittering and beak opened to let fling this volley of explosive-sounding song.' (p. 188)

This vivid picture of the pre-coital mad dance and voice-play of a black-bird would naturally remind us of all that was said above about 'spontaneous ritual' of primitive man. And in fact, the vocal behaviour of this type together with such other display acts as spreading wings and tail, hopping and leaping, bowing and strutting around, etc., are often referred to by ornithologists as 'ritual' of birds.

Let there be no mistake about it, however. We are not in any way suggesting that these seemingly ritualistic acts are a monopoly of birds. For such interplays between male and female before copulation are observed even among fishes and butterflies. The careful examination of the Grayling (eumenis semele) done by N. Tinbergen, for example, has revealed the fact that this butterfly performs a series of pre-coital displays among which are counted a graceful bow and embracing female's antenae by male's forewings (*Social Behaviour in Animals*, Chap. I). The point I should like to make is that, in the case of birds, the use of vocal music usually forms an indispensable component of this kind of 'ritual', playing as it does an essential role for stimulating the partner and eliciting his or her response.

We may profitably recall at this juncture what was pointed out a few paragraphs earlier as the most distinctive feature of birds in general; namely, that they are vocalizing animals with a marked instinctive tendency to produce sounds. Indeed, birds and human beings seem to be the only races in the whole animal kingdom with the tendency to constant production of sounds, though in the former this inborn capacity for language has—for reasons upon which it is not necessary to speculate now—failed to evoke verbal symbolism in the proper sense of the word. For our present inquiry, the central point to emphasize is this, that, in both of these vocalizing races, spontaneous verbiage appears to open up an escape from situations of emotional stress; that the voice, speaking more generally, tends to undergo an inner transformation under the influence of desire and emotion, and

to assume a deep symbolic significance. Perhaps this will give us a hint as to the vital importance of the situational contexts of spontaneous ritual for the genesis of human language.

It is still common talk among philologists and linguists that Otto Jespersen, seeking to follow language back to its earliest beginning, has at last come to the conclusion that it was born probably in the courting days of mankind as 'something between the nightly love-lyrics of puss upon the tiles and the melodious love-songs of the nightingale'. (*Language*, Chap. XX1, 12). Viewed in the light of the foregoing discussion, this supposition would appear not so alarming and fantastic as it looks at first sight.

Chapter X

LANGUAGE IN A MAGIC CIRCLE

Throughout the preceding chapters there has run the thought that the linguistic behaviour of man is, as a whole and in the last analysis, something essentially magical. It has been assumed that of all the distinguishable functions of human language, the magical function is the most primitive; that it is, genetically speaking, more fundamental and more important than all the others, these—whatever they may be—being regarded, on such an interpretation, as altogether secondary and derivative. Arguing along these lines, I have tried to show that even those speech functions (e. g. the designative - informative use of words) which, as far as their present status goes, have decidedly no association at all with magic and ritual, may in a certain sense be considered as enfeebled, sporadic traces of the more primitive, magical usage. To speak in terms of the fundamental duality of primitive life, the domain of the Sacred and the domain of the Profane, to which repeated reference has been made, it is from the standpoint of the former that I have consistently tried to examine the facts of language.

In order to do full justice to realities, however, we must reverse the direction and look at the matter also from the viewpoint of the opposite side, the domain of the Profane. Now hardly have we changed our perspective in that way than it becomes clear that most of our words disclose no such miraculous efficacy as is generally supposed to reside in them at the true Animistic stage. The veil of mystery suddenly withdrawn, language reveals itself as too meagre and too commonplace an instrument to work wonders with.

As we have seen, language, according to the mythical type of thinking, is in itself sacred; every word pronounced takes effect immediately as magic by the mere fact of its having been uttered. Such, however, is not actually the case with language as we know it in the real world. In all societies both civilized and savage, wherever there is a more or less rigorous observance of the distinction between the domain of the Sacred and the domain of the Profane, language, as an actual social fact, belongs rather to the latter than to the former. To put the matter in a somewhat different way, it is 'ordinary language' that forms everywhere the substructure of all linguistic culture. But is this not after all tantamount to saying that our words do not (or rather, have ceased to) reveal as a rule any magical efficacy?

Might we say that language, through long use, has completely lost whatever

magical power it may have originally possessed? At all evenis, this at least appears to be certain: most of our words have struck root so deeply in the soil of the ordinary relations of life, they are so enmeshed with all manner of irrelevancies of everyday existence that they require more extraordinary conditions if they are to change at all their character and begin to operate magically. Excepting a small number of special words not permitted for profane purpose, ordinary language is in need of a preliminary process of consecration in order that it might subserve magical function. It must, for that purpose, be isolated beforehand from the immediate practical life interests, ceremoniously purified, heightened and transformed into something entirely different in nature and purport from what it is in the domain of the Profane. Thus among all races and in all ages, the heightening of lauguage, or the shifting of speech level from the 'normal' to the 'sacred', is known to be a necessary prerequisite to all magical use of words. This I should like to call the process of magical 'framing' of lauguage.

As a matter of fact, the 'framing' can occur in a well-nigh innumerable variety of ways, which, however, may conveniently brought under two heads: (1) outer and (2) inner 'faming'. I begin with the first category. The devices for the outer 'framing' of language are best represented by those specifically ritualistic situations so frequently met with in primitive society, such as annual or seasonal festivities with a big concourse of people, or magico-religious ceremonies of a more private nature held on various solemn occasions in man's life as birth, entering adult life, marriage, sickness and death. As is easy to see, these situations are completely set at a distance from common life and everyday thought. Amid the emotional ebullition presiding over the whole process, everything is naturally made impressive, strong and grandiose. The whole life becomes modified and heightened. Nothing remains normal, ordinary, and commonplace. It will be natural that, under such conditions, language also should become something extraordinary. Supported by intense emotional excitement animating all the participants, every single snippet of speech, otherwise insipid, assumes dignity and impressiveness. In such a context, speech as such is sacred, the act of utterance is, in itself, an act of releasing some magical power.

The phenomenon itself is so well known that there will be no need to give more than a few instances. Here are two or three random examples taken from the literature of ancient peoples. The first one is from the *Manyō-shu*, the oldest anthology of Japanese poetry to which reference was made in Chapter II. As we saw in some detail there, the world in which the Manyō man lived was a world of true Animism; it was a world peopled by all manner of gods and spirits, and characterized by the belief in the mysterious power of the word. To his mind, as to the animistic type of mind in general, naming was a magical evocation, and the very act of speech was, theoretically at least, something of magical purport. And yet on the other hand, even in such an age, ordinary language was considered too

base and 'unclean' to be employed for the purpose of communicating with gods and spirits or for various other magico-religious purposes. The following poem depicts vividly the special rites of purification being performed with the view of heightening the status of ordinary language and transforming it into something worthy to be used in a conversation with invisible powers. It is a work of a famous woman poet, Lady Sakanoue of Ōtomo, to be found in volume III of the Anthology (379).

> Oh, my venerable God, / Who has descended from the Plain of Heaven! / Here I am, with a branch of the sacred evergreen / Brought from the heart of the mountain; / White shreds of hemp with sacred fibre I have bound to it. / I have dug in a divine wine-jar with purifying rites; / Through numberless bamboo-rings I have run a cord / To hang it down over the jar; / Bending on my knees like a deer, / I, a maiden, dressed in my ceremonial gown, / Thus reverentially supplicate thee; / Would that I could meet my lord!

It is evident that the heart and core of the whole poem is contained in the final single line expressing the wish of the girl, all the preceding lines doing no more than describe the pomp of the ritual and the hardships of preparation. But these were necessary in order to exalt a simple optative sentence into an efficacious formula of love-magic. Moreover, we find exactly the same type of ritual procedure constantly referred to throughout the *Manyō-shu*, a fact which confirms the view that the poem mirrors faithfully the magical habits and ideas that were prevalent in those days. (See for example, VIII 420, 433, V 904, IX 1790, XIII 3284, etc., etc.)

Parallels are found in plenty not only in ancient literature but in any ethnographical records of religious practices of uncivilized people. As to the concrete ritual procedure to be taken there is of course an endless diversity, but that is entirely irrelevant so long as the main objective of the rites—that of creating an atmosphere peculiarly cogent to the heightening of language—is attained by means of them. In the well-known case of the Syrian prophet Balaam in the Old Testament, for instance, the act of sacrificing on seven altars one bullock and one ram each serves the purpose of producing the extraordinary conditions in which to receive divine words. (*Num.* 23, 1—3). The ritual may easily be expanded to the solemn grandeur of an elaborate ceremony, but it may also, taking an opposite course, be reduced to some simple gesture having a symbolic value. Nor are the actual words used and the grammatical forms they assume a matter of central importance provided that the efficacy of the outer 'framing' does not happen to be impaired. For on such formal occasions definitely marked off from those of the profane world, the situation itself becomes somehow suffused with magical

animation, and becomes, consequently, capable of bestowing on every word (or indeed on every syllable) uttered a mysterious, magical emphasis. The effect, needless to say, is greatly enhanced if inner 'framing' is made to work concurrently, if in other terms, such special forms of expression are deliberately employed as would be particularly suitable to the solemnity of the occasion. And in fact, magical formulas are, in a very great majority of cases, couched in forms apart from those of ordinary use. But, at least in theory, a well-ordered and carefully prepared ritual setting can, in its own right, induce an inner transformation of ordinary language as a whole in the direction indicated above. We must remember that, in such magical contexts of situation, words are supposed to take effect as soon as uttered. A name pronounced immediately conjures up the invisible, intangible spirit of the thing designated by the name; hence the magical practice of summoning by name, which is one of the most prominent and persistent features of sorcery and prayer. But of this much has been said earlier in passages more than one. It is to be remarked further that, in all such situations of magical animation, even language in its descriptive function rarely behaves as pure statement of fact, for the magical atmosphere of volition presiding over the whole process may in most cases be efficacious enough to change any description instantly into an expressed wish or command. To describe an occurrence means here to *will* that occurrence. Accordingly, to depict in words some future event is to determine beforehand the future course of events, as is well exemplified by the so-called agricultural magic in which the growing of plants is depicted in minute details.

We are now in a position to understand the reason why it happens so often that narrative poetry and prose are recited during great festivals. The Babylonian *Epic of Creation*, for example, the recitation of which formed an important part of the New Year ritual, appears to have been originally composed for magical purposes (cf. C. J. Gadd, *Babylonian Myth and Ritual* in S. H. Hook's *Myth and Ritual*). As an interesting parallel case we may cite a festal ode from 'Minor Odes' of *Shih Ching* 詩經, entitled *Hsin Nan Shan* 信南山. It begins by narrating how the Sacred King Yü, opening up the country for cultivation, instituted for the people the method of agriculture; then it depicts the details of the agricultural labours, and finally goes on to a description of the ceremonies of sacrifice to ancestors.

> (1) Verily that Southern Mountain, / Yü himself wrought order in the region. / Cultivating its plains and swamps, / His descendants made it into fields. / We define its boundaries, we put it in order, / And make the channels run in all directions.
> (2) The heavens above are clouded all over, / Snow is falling in flakes; / Then follows the drizzling rain of spring. / The ground has received plenty of the rain, / It has become moistened to the full. / It pro-

duces for us hundred kinds of grain.

(3) The larger and smaller divisions are now in good order. / The millet is luxuriant and abundant; / It is the result of the labours of the descendants. / We will make therewith spirits and food, / and present to our 'defunct' and our guests. / Long life of myriads of years!

(4) In the middle of the fields huts are erected. / In the larger and smaller divisions there are gourds; / They are sliced and pickled, / And offered to the spirits of our ancestors. / Their descendants will have long life, / And receive the heavenly blessing.

(5) The ceremony is commenced with libation of pure drink, / Followed by the sacrifice of a red bull, / These are reverentially offered to the ancestors. / (The king himself) takes the knife adorned with small bells, / With which he lays bare the hair of the bull, / And takes its blood and fat.

(6) Reverentially we present, reverentially we offer. / With the fragrance (of the burned fat) the air is heavy. / The performance of the ceremony is thus very brilliant. / The ancestors are grandly seated there. / They will reward us with happiness. / Life of myriads of years, without end!

There can be little doubt that the recital of such an ode was believed to have a beneficial influence on the new crops of the year. It is to be further observed that in an 'isolating' language such as ancient Chinese, characterized by monosyllabism and the absence of inflectional endings, the role of outer 'framing' must be on the whole much more important than in inflectional languages where the distinction between simple narration and volitional utterance is, as a rule, morphologically indicated by the inflections of the verb. In the almost complete absence of such formal criteria, as in ancient Chinese, it happens very often that we are left uncertain as to whether a given sentence must be rendered in the indicative or the desiderative, if we are not to gather it from the concrete situation in which it was utterd. The fact is that, so far as the purely linguistic aspect of the matter is concerned, there is no distinction at all between the two kinds of expression; or we might perhaps rather say that the string of sentences, in such cases, is double-faced, simple narrative functioning at one and the same time as a direct expression of the speaker's will. See for example the following passage taken from the same *Shih Ching* (*Hsiao Ya, T'ien Pao* 天保). These are the first three stanzas of an ode which was sung in all probability by the 'guests' of the king at festal entertainments in the royal court, celebrating his praises and wishing for him long-during happiness. The ode, it will be remarked, does no more than describe in simple style a certain state of prosperity, but here each descriptive sentence as it falls instantly passes into a prayer.

(1) 天保定爾 Heaven keeps thee and establishes thee,
亦孔之固 And makes it very secure,
俾爾單厚 It causes thee to be wholly virtuous.
何福不除 What happiness is not renewed?
俾爾多益 (Heaven) causes thee to increase in happiness,
以莫不庶 So everything is in abundance.

(2) 天保定爾 Heaven keeps thee and establishes thee,
俾爾戩穀 It causes thee to be entirely happy,
罄無不宜 And there is nothing which is not excellent.
受天百祿 Thou receivest hundred favours of Heaven.
降爾遐福 It hastens to send down to thee everlasting happiness
維日不足 (As if) it had not one single day to waste.

(3) 天保定爾 Heaven keeps thee and establishes thee,
以莫不興 So everything prospers with thee.
如山如阜 Like mountains, like high lands
如岡如陵 Like hills, like steep peaks,
如川之方至 Like rivers ever increasing,
以莫不增 Everything goes on multiplying.

Failing such contextual help, it often becomes difficult to choose between two possible interpretations, the indicative and the optative. As an illuminating example we may take a little poem entitled *Chiu Mu* 樛木 to be found in *Kuo Fêng* (*Chou Nan, Shih Ching*), consisting of three short stanzas of four lines each. Here is the first stanza:

南有樛木 (south. have. drooping. tree)
葛藟纍之 (ivy. vine. cling. that)
樂只君子 (rejoice. indeed. prince. son)
福履綏之 (bliss. happiness. repose. that)

The first and the second verses are obviously descriptive; they may be translated: 'In the south there are trees with drooping boughs, / Various creepers are clinging to them.' But concerning the interpretation of the last two lines—which, besides, are repeated in only slightly different form in the two remaining stanzas—there has been considerable diversity of opinion among the leading authorities in Chinese philology. According to a school of the old commentators, for instance, these verses are to be understood as a description of the high virtue of the Lady T'ai Ssû, the mistress of king Wên's harem (cf. Chêng Hsüan, *Mao Chuan Chêng Chien*). Another school, on the contrary, tries to interprete them as a good wish for the same queen. Leaving out of consideration all historical allusions of this kind—which are in fact entirely irrelevant from the standpoint of the

modern critical exegesis—we may reasonably interprete them in a much simpler way as words invoking a blessing on the 'princely person' mentioned in the third line, whoever he may be: 'O how happy our lord is! May happiness and blissfulness give repose to him!' At all events, it is easy to see that such difference of opinion is due to the lack of an exact information as to the circumstances under which, and the real purpose for which, the ode was originally composed.

So much for the heightening of language effected on a grand scale, with all due ceremony, so to speak. It will be well to remember that such openly magico-religious contexts of situation as seasonal festivities, pompous ceremonies and the like, are certainly the most important but not in any way the sole means of outer 'framing'. For, as one would expect, there are many other ready-made devices of a much simpler style for attaining the same ends. As hinted above, the ritual may, in some cases, be reduced to the merest performance of some very simple symbolic act, such as pointing with the finger, putting one's hand on something sacred, sitting up straight, looking serious, and so on. As everybody knows this occurs very often in more or less conventionalized forms of oathtaking. Take for example the very curious standing formula of an oath of affirmation in Hebrew: "Kōh ya'aseh Yahweh lī w^{e}khōh yosīph ki ....." (lit. 'So may God do to me and so may He do it again if .....') to be found in the books of *Samuel, Kings* and *Ruth* in the Old Testament. The demonstrative word 'so' clearly refers to some symbolic gesture accompanying the utterance. The formula thus takes us back to a remoter age when man used to take oath over the pieces of the sacrifice, the whole ceremony being now symbolically represented by a simple form of mimicry.

In Chinese, "chih t'ien shih jih" 指天誓日 ('to point one's finger towards the heavens and swear by the sun') is a set phrase meaning to plight one's faith. This custom of pointing to the sun in swearing can be traced back to remote antiquity in China.

指九天以為正兮 Chih chiu t'ien i wei chêng hsi
夫唯靈脩之故也 Fu wei ling hsiu chih ku yeh.
(*Ch'u Tz'ŭ, Li Sao.* 楚辭, 離騷)

(I point to the ninefold Heaven and make it my witness!
Surely all this I do only for the sake of the wise, beautifully
adorned one [i. e. my lord])

謂予不信 Wei yü pu hsin
有如皦日 Yu ju chiao ju
(Shih Ching, Wang, Ta Ch'ê 詩經, 王, 大車.)

(If [you] say I am not sincere,
By that bright sun [I swear I am])

It is to be remarked, furthermore, that this represents the commonest type of

reduced ritual of oathtaking to be seen among the most varied races over the world. Thus it will be seen that in such cases the act of calling to witness something sacred, accompanied by the pointing gesture, is generally deemed sufficient to bring about a magical atmosphere, in which the heightening of language occurs almost of its own accord.

Nay more, the process here described of the gradual reduction of ritual to ever more simplified forms may lead even to the nullification of all outward ceremonies. Thus among primitive peoples at all stages of Animism, the magical 'framing' of language is usually believed to be effected by the mental act of willing it, or speaking in terms of primitive psychology, by the mere projection of the Soul-power on the external environment. This is particularly the case with persons endowed with extraordinary spiritual power, such as magicians, sorcerers, or prophets. It is common knowledge among anthropologists that in the later stages of Magic, a mere wish or volition is very often held to be magically efficacious even without any intervention of ceremonies or rites. When a man of strong Soul has described in words, for example, some future event and has really willed it into the bargain, the event described and desired is *ipso facto* bound to realize itself sooner or later.

Such is, to give but one example out of a number, the volitive force of the future in the "Brahmaçāpa", i. e. a Brahman-imprecation which inflicts a fatal wound on Daçaratha in *Rāmāyana* (II, 44, l. 55 ff). The terrible curse was, on the face of it, nothing more than a simple description in the future tense of a miserable death: Because my innocent son has been killed by thee so imprudently, I also will imprecate evil upon thee. As I must lose my life-breath now, overwhelmed with grief at the loss of my beloved son, so thou shalt, likewise, lose they life-breath desiring in vain to see thy son. It is obvious that, in such a case, the invisible act of projecting the will-power constitutes the whole ritual as a necessary prerequisite to the releasing of the magical virtue inherent in the word. Thus in primitive thought, a strong Soul is at liberty to perform whenever and wherever it likes a sort of *ad hoc* magical ceremony by which to mark off at will a given piece of speech from its ordinary context.

But these are, it might be said, after all superstitious ideas peculiar to the age of animism, and have, therefore, little or nothing to do with civilized populations. This is of course largely true. But it should not be taken in the sense that we moderns no longer possess any means of outer 'framing' of language. No; for, we must not forget, there is the vast domain of spontaneous magic of emotional expression. Even the kind of wish-magic which I have just described in the preceding paragraph as representing the utmost limit of reduction of magical ritual, might be regarded in a certain sense as already belonging to this domain. For it must be admitted that the 'strong Soul' as understood there is after all a relative notion; in other terms, it is not by any means a monopoly of certain privileged

persons, such as great Brahmans, professional magicans, prophets, and the like; practically everyone can, under certain specific circumstances, become (at least temporarily) a strong Soul. In the particular case of the future tense, this is but another way of saying that it begins to behave voluntatively as soon as the speaker under emotional stress wills it to behave in that way. We shall note that in many languages—even in those which possess well-established voluntative 'moods' such as subjunctive and optative—the future is commonly used in expressions of wish, prohibitions, threats, promises, asseverations, etc. It may be added that Adelaide Hahn, who has carried out an extensive inquiry into the origin of the subjunctive and the optative in the Indo-European languages, has come to the conclusion that not only are the two moods used similarly and sometimes interchangeably but they were in origin pure futures (*Subjunctive and Optative*, Chap. VI, VII).

We should recall at this juncture all that was said about spontaneous ritual of emotion in the foregoing chapter. It will be easy to see that, viewed from the standpoint of the present chapter, spontaneous magic will prove to be a real source of very powerful devices for effecting the shifting of language level here spoken of. Put in modern colourless phraseology, this will only amount to saying that the state of intense emotional excitement tends to induce a heightening of language. I have earlier tried to show (Chap. IV) how in situations of emotional tension and stress the apparently meagre language of everyday life suddenly changes its character and begins to exert a mighty influence over the minds and actions of men. All manner of non-verbal accompaniments, such as manual gesture, facial expression, voice-modulation, forms of mimicry, etc., are utilized and even deliberately exploited for the purpose of evoking certain feelings on the part of the auditor, or causing him to act in the desired fashion. All these modes of non-verbal behaviour which usually accompany the emotive use of language may primarily be no more than spontaneous, natural expressions of emotion, but, from the viewpoint of the hearer, they function at the same time as external devices for making words behave in a magical way.

But we see now that if this is what distinguishes the emotive use of language, then not only this or that particular piece of speech but verbal language in general as opposed to written language, all speech, that is, which is actually spoken in real life, must, from the broadest point of view, be recognized as essentially emotive in nature, and, therefore, as already magically 'framed'—though of course in very many varying degrees from the heighest to the least. For, as used in warm-blooded live situations in the real world, all linguistic symbols tend to assume readily and naturally at least a modicum of emotional expressiveness, and in fact they are accompanied almost always by supplementary behaviour of the type discussed above. Thus the difference between 'ordinary' and 'heightened' language, paradoxical though it may sound on first hearing, will be reduced to a mere matter of degree. What is generally conceived of as 'ordinary' language—if indeed the conception has not resulted from giving exclusive attention to the written type of language—is, on this interpretation, nothing but those portions of speech which are completely mechanized, and whose magical 'framing' has, through mechanization, been weakened to an almost imperceptible faintness. However, the topic of the influence exerted by situations of high emotional tension on the status of language has received our attentive consideration throughout the volume, and further detailed discussion would only be an useless repetition. Besides, we shall have to come back to the problem once again in dealing with the second of the means of consecrating linguistic symbols: the *inner framing* of language.

By internal devices for heightening language I understand primarily those various kinds of inner transformation which linguistic symbols usually have to undergo in order to assume ceremonial dignity. So far the outer 'framing' has been described as being able to induce a magical atmosphere strong enough to make any piece of speech behave in a supernormal way quite independently of a formal change on the part of the words used. This, as already remarked, is theoretically possible. Yet, in practice, the outer 'framing' cannot fulfill its office satisfactorily without the concurrence of another kind of 'framing' which affects the inner structure of language itself. As a matter of fact, outer and inner processes of 'framing' tend to go hand in hand. It is most natural that extraordinary emotions should demand an extraordinary language for their adequate expression. In a litany, for example, no one will fail to notice that commonplace words and phrases are ridiculously out of tune; in such a case, special forms of expression must be chosen with deliberate design which would command respect and would be particularly suited to the solemnity of the occasion. That is why, when dealing with the problem of outer 'framing', we had to encroach more than once upon the realm of inner 'framing'. It will be recalled that most of the examples cited in the foregoing sections have been in verse-form.

Chapter XI

THE HEIGHTENED LANGUAGE

Examined in the light of the foregoing discussion, the problem of the inner 'framing' of language will be found to lead perforce to a re-examination of all verbal language. Space will permit, however, only a cursory study of some of the most characteristic devices that have been developed for the specific purpose of producing a heightened language.

It will be clear from what has preceded that the use of 'emotive' terms constitutes, from our specific point of view, an indubitable case of inner 'framing' of language. With most of us it is almost the only device in hand for heightening at will any words and phrases we like. Since, in order to realize a desired end, we must make above all a *moving* appeal, we are constantly forced to introduce into our ordinary conversation, unconsciously or by design, particular words with high emotional tension. It is, indeed, not too much to say that without this kind of inner 'framing' language could not have its normal function.

We should remember, on the other hand, that even 'neutral' terms, when delivered in an appropriate tone of voice, may very well have the same effect as 'emotive' terms. As I have noted above more than once, there is practically no word that may not be made to behave magically by a louder or more emotionally modulated pronunciation. It is a maettr of common experience that, on the lips of a practised propagandist, even routine words change their status and begin to exercise the strongest emotional appeal over the audience. This is more often than not due to a skillful use of *emphasis*. That rhetorical emphasis and magic are closely allied to each other has been already pointed out in an earlier context. If, in talking with others, we raise our voice, dwell with emphasis upon some word or group of words while scurrying over others, this alone will be enough to give prominence to the former; and the word or group of words thus made prominent becoming in a manner of speaking the pivot upon which all the others turn, the whole sentence will end in carrying a markedly emotional tinge. A sentence 'framed' as a whole in this way, may further, under appropriate circumstances, subserve the function of arousing emotional reactions on the part of the hearer.

The magical implication of this phenomenon will be clearly perceived if we place it against the background of more primitive ideas and customs. Under primitive conditions of life, verbal emphasis is admittedly one of the handiest techniques by which to release the magical virtue contained in the word. Without going the length of performing toilsome rites, man can, by means of this simple informal device, enclose any verbal sequence with a magical circle offhand and with ease. All that is required of him is to pronounce the word or phrase to be made particularly obtrusive and effective in a certain tone of voice and with a certain degree of emphasis, or to remove it simply from its regular place in the sentence, or again to attach an emphasizing, asseverative particle to it.

We have already seen in Chapter IV that an emphatic affirmation does very often verge on a ceremonial asseveration. Take for example the following short sentence from *Ch'u Tz'ŭ* 楚辭, 離騷 armed with no less than three emphasizing particles: "*Kou* jü ch'ing *ch'i hsin* fang"苟余情其信芳 (lit. 'Verily my sentiment, that!, [is] in truth honourable!) this is already a genuine oath. In classical Arabic a particular form of the verb generally known as 'energetic' mood —formed by adding the characteristically strong syllable "anna" etc., to the indicative—was in use in solemn statements, oaths, commands and wishes, particularly in conjunction with the emphatic particle "la": e. g. "*La* aqtul*anna*" lit. '*Verily* I will *surely* kill!'

As regards the relationship of verbal emphasis with volition it will be interesting to note that in such languages as Sumerian and Accadian, the most ordinary emphatic particle—"he-", "ha-", or "hu-" in the former, "lu" in the latter —coincides with the commonest particle of volition. The following example from Sumerian shows this double use of the same particle (or prefix) in a single passage:

"e-a-ni……*hu*-mu-na-du (emphatic)		lit. Her-house. I-built-her,
ki-bi *he*-im-mi-gi……	(")	Its-place. I restored
gal-li-esh *he*-im-mi-dur…	(")	Mightily. I-made-[her]-dwell.
…nin-mu *hu*-mu-hul-li-en	(optative)	O my-lady, mayst-thou-rejoice!
…ud-mu *he*-sud-ud"	(")	My-days, may-they-be-long!

—Cuneiform Texts, B. M. Vol. I—

In Accadian, likewise, "likshud" (lū ikshud) may mean both 'surely he captured (perfect-preterite)' and 'let him capture! (optative-imperative)'. G. R. Driver finds it impossible to conceive any semantic transition whereby the preterite "ikshud" ('he captured') can have come to mean also 'let him capture' or *vice versa* (cf. his *Problems of the Hebrew Verbal System*, p. 32). In the light of the preceding discussion, however, there is nothing disturbing in this phenomenon. It will be well to remember that in the Semitic languages in general, the perfect-preterite is constantly used in wishes, requests, oaths, curses and blessings as well as in the language of contracts, buying and selling; it represents any act or event which one hopes may be done or may happen as having already taken place.

In exactly the same way, in Ancient Chinese we see the commonest particle of

emphasis "ye" 也 frequently employed in the optative-imperative sense. It will be noteworthy to point out here that the grammarian Yang Po Chün 揚伯峻 has rightly seen the close semantic affinity between the two sorts of signification; in his *Wên Yen Yü Fa* 文言語法 (*A Grammar of Classical Chinese*, 1955, § 11, 18) he maintains that, since the word "ye" gives emphasis to any word or sentence it is but natural that it should also be much used in wishs, commands, and prohibitions.

This we may probably compare with the optative-imperative use of the (augmentless) past indicative in Vedic Sanscrit—the so-called injunctive—in commands and prohibitions. Adelaide Hahn in the above-cited book *Subjunctive and Optative* suggests that the use of the past is tied up with the matter of aspect. Since, in her opinion, a command, and still more a prohibition, is likely to have punctual rather than durative force, the use of the past 'tense'—which was originally not a tense at all but a punctual-perfective aspect—is particularly germane to the case. We must admit that this view is very probable, and that, further, the same will probably apply with equal force to the volitive use of the perfect-preterite so common in the Semitic languages. However, I venture to maintain that, at least in the case of the latter languages, the phenomenon will be best explained as a sort of anticipatory verbal representation of what man desires, the enactment through an act of mental evocation of the desired (but as yet unrealized) end. It is in this sense a particular kind of semantic emphasis. Now if this argumentation be sound, we might understand the use of the type *lu*-preterite in the optative as a representative case of double emphasis used as an expression of desire and will. To some this would appear to be a statement which needs elaborating. Since, however, the problem belongs to the very specified domain of Semitic philology, any further discussion will be out of place in the present study. So I shall simply bring this section to a close with a fine example showing the volitive-desiderative use of the form in question in a 'conditional curse'.

"Mu-ni-kir mu-sar-ai da-ai-i-şi a-ma-ti-ia	(The destroyer of my stela, who ignores my word,
.....	
Ashshur shar ialni u ilani rabūti sha shamē u irşitim	may Assur, king of the gods, and the great gods of heaven and earth
ar-rat [la] nap-shu-ri ma-ru-ush-ti li-ru-ru-shu-ma (<lū īrurū)	curse him with an evil curse which cannot be removed; may
sharru-us-su lish-ki-pu (<lū ishkipū balāt-şu li-ki-mu-shu (<lū ikimū-shu)	They overthrow his kingship, deprive him of life and

shuma-shu zēra-shu·····	his name and his seed
ina nap-khar mātāi li-khal-li-qu (<lū ukhalliqū)	in every land may they overthrow)

—The Annals of Sennecherib, *The Temple of the New Year's Feast*, ed. Luckenbill, VIII, II. 66—72—

As another important means of inner 'framing' of language we might mention the use of words of stilted obscurity. Now it is of common knowledge that, in all ages and all countries, magical texts are characteristically filled with all manner of difficult words and obscure expressions. Among primitive tribes, spells and litanies chanted at sacred ceremonies are very often mere gibberish, or at most consist of a multitude of incomprehensible words never to be used in ordinary life. There can be no doubt that these contribute towards enhancing the solemnity of the language and making it sound more mysterious and impressive. For the specific purpose of carrying the obscurity of expression to its utmost limits, all sorts of archaisms and even mere galimatias are made use of; strange names are invented or, as the need arises, freely borrowed from foreign tongues. Only one example may be cited here from a collection of Egyptian magical papyri. It is a very curious spell to be uttered over a dog-bite: 'The spell of Amon and Triphis thus: ····· *Shamâla, Malet,* / The mysterious one who has reached the most mysterious one, / *Greshei,* The lord of *Rent, Tahne, Bahne.* / This dog, this black one, / The dog, the mysterious one, /·····Relax thy tooth / Stop thy spittle! / ·····Listen to this speech, / Horus, who healed burning, / Who went to the abyss, / Who founded the earth; Listen, O *Yaho-Sabaho,* / *Abjaho* by name!' We shall note that in the last line but one, the God of the Israelites in His characteristically Biblical form 'Jehovah of Hosts' ("Yahweh Ṣĕbhāōth") is expressly invoked, and that, moreover, in the closing line the same God is called, again in Hebrew, *Abiaho,* i. e. 'Father (ab) of Yahweh (iaho)', which is a very strange name indeed. (From *The Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden,* ed. and trans. by Griffith and Thompson, 1904, Plate XIX)

It is but natural that spells and formulae couched in a strangely mysterious language, or in one whose meaning has entirely lost, should tend to produce the impression of being more efficacious than those consisting of ordinary intelligible words. Thus in Babylonia and Assyria, where the Sumerian language was no longer understood by the common people, it enjoyed an immense prestige as a sacred language endowed with same hidden virtue. The liturgy and the penitential psalms which played such an important role in the life of the Accadians, were always said in Sumerian, and could be efficacious only in that language. Such is also the case even in our own days with Sanscrit and Pali used in Buddhist services. This tendency may, as is extremely often the case with professional magi-

cians and sorcerers, be sharpened into the strange creed that the more incomprehensible an expression is, the more powerful it must be. Pico de Mirandola once remarked: a word devoid of all sensible meaning has most influence over the demons. As a matter of fact, the magical use of totally unintelligible syllables does occur frequently in the language of poetry, In the cultic and lyrical songs of primitive tribes, rhythmic singing often seems to go on independently of the meanings of the words. Let us now take the matter in detail.

Poetry is doubtless the most primitive and by far the most universal of all the known artifices of inner magical 'framing' of language. From time immemorial it has everywhere been the magical language *par excellence*. We have noted in an earlier chapter how, in the ancient world, the poet, magician, sorcerer, and prophet were originally represented by one and the same person. Among the peoples of antiquity—and the same applies equally to the backward populations of the present-day world—poetry was not a mere particular *genre* of literature, an adornment of life; it was a real, living, magical power. Indeed, it belongs to the *Urerlebnis* of man that even those words which otherwise sound quite thin and flat, often gain an astonishing sonority and impressiveness when put in metrical or rhythmic form, and become definitely removed from the realm of daily life. So striking is this experience to the primitive type of mind that poetry is not seldom believed to posses the supernatural power to sway even the natural course of events. The famous line of Virgil was cited earlier. Here is another illuminating example. In the now lost *Book of Heroes* ("Sēper Hayyāshār"), we are told, there was a poem preserved from the earliest days of Israelite history, a song sung by Joshua *extempore* on the memorable day when he succeeded in routing his enemies at Gibeon. The Old Testament gives it in this form:

"Shemesh b^{e}Ghibh^{e}ōn dōm	O sun, stand still over Gibeon,
W^{e}yārēaḥ b^{e}'emeq Ayyalōn!"	(Stand) O moon, over the vale of Ajalon!

To this the author of the *Book of Joshua* adds: 'And in fact the sun stood still in the middle of the sky, and did not run on to set for a whole day'. (*Josh.* 10, 12-13)

Similarly, the writer of the remarkable 'Great Preface' 大序 to *Shih Ching* remarks: 'For the purpose of moving Heaven and Earth, and of affecting gods and spirits, nothing is more appropriate than poetry', thus attesting to the great antiquity of this kind of belief in the magical power of poetry in China.

It will be interesting to notice in this connection the tremendous importance attached to poetry in ancient warfare. Since, to the view of ancient people, war was always in the last analysis a sort of psychic contest, psychic weapons, i. e.

words uttered in verse-forms, were of far greater importance than stone and iron. Among them a piece of poetry could work at any time as a real, dangerous weapon, which was all the more to be feared because it was invisible and of a psychic nature, which, when launched against an enemy, was sure to penetrate to the inward parts of the victim, weaken and paralyse his life-energy, and finally cause defeat and death. It is no accident that the ancients often described the dangerous words of incantation as 'arrows' and 'spears'. A Psalmist complaining of the injuries done by such words says, 'I am living among lions who prey upon men; Their teeth are spears and arrows, their tongue is a sharp sword' (Ps. 57, 4). This should not be taken as an useless metaphorical exaggeration. How real and vivid this kind of feeling was in early man may be known, for example, from a curious primitive habit mentioned by Ibn Hishām in his *Biography of Mahomet* (*Sirah Rasūl Allāh*, ed. Wüstenfeld, 1, 641): 'It is said that when a curse is directed against a man, he should immediately throw himself down sideways in order that the arrow might miss the mark.' Mahomet, we are told, once remarked to his favourite poet Hassan ibn Thābit, 'Your poetry is much more dangerous to our enemies than arrows shot in the dark of night.' (*Mustaṭraf* LXVI). And the *Atharva Veda*, to give one more telling example, describing the supernatural power released by the Brahmans' Word compares it to 'sharp arrows': 'Brahmans have sharp arrows and missiles, / The volley they hurl is not in vain / Pursuing with fervour and with fury / They cast him down from afar.' (*AV* 18, tr. Bloomfield).

There is much evidence to show that everywhere in the ancient world, poets played a great part in wartime. They alone could really disarm the enemies of their tribe by hitting right into their souls terrible curses and spells in metrical or rhythmic form. They alone could bring destruction and shame upon whomsoever they detested by the magical power of the word. In an unequalled work on the prehistory of satire in Arabic literature (*Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie*, Erster Teil, I), Ignaz Goldziher has shown with remarkable thoroughness how among the pre-Islamic Arabs wars were fought with words as well as material weapons. The most curious thing about this is that among them what finally decided the issue in war was not the strength of the latter so much as that of the former. Cursing or taunting by means of a specifically 'framed' language was counted among the most important elements of warfare, without which one could hardly hope to win the battle. For this purpose recourse was had exclusively to the "hijā" form of poetry—'satire' or taunt-song—which had originally been developed as a verse-pattern peculiar to the speech of magic aud witchcraft, and an effective use of which was generally believed to be capable of destroying instantly the soul of a person to whom it was directed.

The use of of spells in warfare, couched in verse-form and sung or chanted with or without intrumental accompaniment is a phenomenon which is to be seen

far and wide over the the ancient world. In a well-known passage of the *Book of Judges* (5, 12) we see the prophetess Deborah sing with Barak:

'Ūri 'ūri D^{e}bhōrāh	Up, up, O Deborah
'Ūri 'ūri dabbe^{e}rī *shīr*.	Up, up with thy *song*!

It is obvious that the term "shīr" here does not mean a 'song' or 'poem' in the ordinary sense of the word: it means a 'strong word', i. e. almost 'magical formula'. The use of the word in this specific sense is, as Otto Eissfeldt has pointed out (*Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, § 10), certainly an exceptional one, in so far as the Old Testament is concerned. In ordinary contexts it means simply a song chanted with instrumental accompaniment. But this unusual use of the word seems to indicate that in still remoter ages there was a time when the 'strong word' was simply called 'song'.

In view of these facts it would be quite understandable that there has always existed an extremely close relationship between prophetism and poetry. To the mind of early man there was naturally no distinction whatsoever to be made between the tribal poet and the tribal seer or prophet. Among the ancients, the poet was invariably a man of extraodinary psychic power, living in constant commerce with the unseen world. He who possessed the secret of the poetic use of language possessed by that very fact the mysterious knowledge of all things past, present, and future, revealed to him during his periods of inspiration. For poetry was, above all, *inspiration* in the fullest sense of the word. This agrees admirably with the evidence afforded by Old Arabic. The word "Shā'ir" ('poet') there, being the active participle of the verb "sha'ara" ('to know'), means properly 'one who knows' or 'knower'. But 'knower' of what? Ignaz Goldziher, in the above-mentioned study on the "Hijā"-poetry, has shown conclusively that this word must have meant originally a possessor of a super-normal knowledge of occult things, and that among the pre-Islamic Arabs the most important function of a poet was to act as the diviner or seer of his tribe.

Such a conception of the poet's function will perhaps be best illustrated by the Biblical story of Balaam. He was an inspired poet; this meant, in the eyes of his contemporaries, that he was a mouthpiece of God. And in fact, because of his divinatory power he was held in the highest esteem. As a genuine poet-prophet. he could predict the course of future events; and the word of prediction going forth from his lips were believed to be invested with superhuman efficacy. In other terms, his inspired prediction could behave as a curse or a blessing as the case may be. When Balak, king of Moab, was in dread of the Israelites who had come swarming over the land, he sent messengers to Balaam with this appeal: 'Pray come and curse for me this people, for they are stronger than I am. Maybe I shall be able to strike them and drive them out of this country. For I know that he whom thou blessest is blessed and he whom thou cursest is cursed.' (*Num.* 22) Everybody knows the result. Three times Balak takes him to a high place in order that the poet-prophet might aim the poisoned arrows of malediction directly at the enemy. But, instead of cursing, three times Balaam blesses them. In a manner which already reminds us of a Canonical prophet, he confesses that he is incapable of saying a word against God's will. 'From Aram (i. e. Syria) has Balak brought me. / The king of Moab from eastern hills. / "Come, curse for me Jacob, / Come, denounce Israel!" / But how can I curse whom God does not curse / And how can I denounce whom Yahweh does not denounce? (23, 7-8).

It is generally held that the case of Balaam marks a transition stage on the way from the old Semitic vaticination to the authentic Hebrew prophecy. However that may be, the most remarkable thing about this event from our particular viewpoint is that the oracles he uttered in a state of prophetic trance are all fine examples of Hebrew poetry. The essential nexus between poetry and prophecy comes still more prominently into view with Canonical prophets. As is well known, their prophecies were mostly delivered in verse-form. Sincein those days poetry was regarded as the real symptom of divine inspiration, a prophet could hardly hope to claim a hearing unless he uttered measured lines.

Indeed, this may be paralleled by examples from all races and from all ages. In ancient Greece, for instance, the oracular responses of Apollo at Delphi were embodied in poetic form. It is no accident that the Greek word "*omphē*", whose original meaning was 'voice', especially 'the modulated voice of song' (cf. Pindar, fr. 53), came to be used in the technical sense of an oracle or prophetic utterance; (see for example Sophocles, *Oedipus Coloneus* 101-103, where the blind Oedipus implores the Furies that they might grant him to close at last his weary life according to 'the oracle of Apollo' "omphās tās Apollōnos" which he received at Delphi in his early manhood.) So also in ancient China. As Marcel Granet has pointed out, the prophecies as recorded in the *Tso Chuan* 左傳 and *Shih Chi* 史記 are almost all in the form of songs composed *extempore* by persons put in a mantic seizure (cf. *Festivals and Songs of Ancient China*, Eng. tr. p. 208, n. I)

In Arabia in the days of paganism, a particular type of rhymed couplets known as "saj'" was in exclusive use among soothsayers for vaticination. This word, with its original meaning of the 'cooing' of pigeon, reflects vividly the impression produced by the unusual muttering sound coming forth from the closed lips of a soothsayer in the state of divine madness. Ibn Hishām (*op. cit.* p. 171) mentions as distinctive marks of the soothsayer "saj'" and "zamzamah", the latter term being nothing more than an onomatopoetic rendering of the low, murmuring noise just referred to. Incidentally it may be remarked that the same term, taken over into Persia, has come to mean the similar whispering chant made by the fire-worshippers during their ablution. It is significant that Mahomet who, in

the early days of his prophetic career, had no alternative but to resort to this form of expression, had to struggle hard against being classed as a 'poet'.

Concerning the close relationship between the art of poetry and the ecstatic state of the seer there is another important point which is yet to be considered. We shall note, to begin with, that in ordinary magico-religious rites of primitive tribes, songs and chants are used not only for the purpose of giving vent to the intense emotions animating the crowd, but also for exciting or stimulating them in the minds of the participants. Similarly, in the case of the seer, some patterns of rhythm or metre, besides being vehicles of inspiration, act very often as powerful means of bringing on a fit of mantic frenzy. In other words, poetry or song is not always the result of ecstasy; in many cases it preceeds and provokes ecstasy. According to N. K. Chadwick, there is in the early Norse literature a very interesting story told of a seeress who, when demanded to give an oracle, insisted that she could not bring herself into the inspired condition until she could get a singer with a good voice to chant the required spells (*Poetry and Prophecy*, Chap. I). Indeed it is evident from ancient records and modern observations that the chanting of poetry is among the most universal means employed in the artificial regulation of ecstasy. To-day, in the more backward parts of the world we find everywhere shamans and medicine-men attaching a paramount importance to the practice of listening to music, whether vocal or otherwise.

Everyone knows of the effect of continuous rhythmic movements and sounds in inducing a state of exaltation or dissociation. It is a commonplace not only among poets but even among general public that certain rhymes and metres, certain modulations in speed and volume of the voice, have lulling or stirring effects even when the words used are devoid of all sensible meaning. Even meaningless ejaculations, if put in verse-form and chanted in tune, may produce a hypnoidal excitement in the audience as well as in the singer. This capacity to respond to rhythmic sounds, which modern people still retain, must have been much more prominent in early man. Primitives, as is well-known, are extremely sensitive to the stimulating effects of music and singing. Through listening to rhythmic sounds astonishingly varied 'attitudes' are easily brought about in them, ranging from simple emotions to burning raptures and ecstasies. Thus the emotional effects of poetry do possess a psycho-physiological basis, and therein lies the great value of rhythm and metre as a means of inner 'framing' of language. It is evident that the magical power of poetry cannot be simply ascribed to primitive fantasy or sheer superstition. And this makes us grasp the ultimate reason why poetry has always played such an essential role among mankind in the vital matters of both the individual and the society.

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